

Weizman to visit Jordan next week

AMMAN (AFP) — Israeli President Ezer Weizman is to visit Jordan next week at the invitation of King Hussein, officials here said Wednesday. Mr. Weizman will visit Jordan on Wednesday and discuss bilateral relations and the peace process with the King, the officials said. King Hussein invited Mr. Weizman to Jordan in October, but the Israeli president asked that the visit be delayed so it would not interfere with the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. Mr. Weizman met with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in Israel on Oct. 8 and went to Egypt on Oct. 14 for talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

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King phones Bahraini, Qatari rulers

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Wednesday phoned Sheikh Isa Ben Salman Al Khalifa of Bahrain to condole him over the death of five Bahrainis in a road accident in Jordan on Tuesday. Sheikh Khalifa voiced appreciation for the King and the Jordanian government for the medical services offered to the injured. The King also phoned Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa Al Thani of Qatar during which they exchanged views on the recent developments in the region. The King congratulated Sheikh Hamad for appointing Sheikh Jassem Ben Hamad as crown prince and over the formation of a new cabinet (see page 2). Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti meanwhile phoned Bahraini Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa Ben Salman Al Khalifa to offer condolences over the death of Bahraini citizens in the accident. Sheikh Khalifa voiced appreciation for the Jordanian government on the assistance offered to the Bahrainis involved in the accident.

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King visits GHQ

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Wednesday called at the General Headquarters of the Armed Forces. He reviewed with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Field Marshal Abdul Hafez Mirai issues of concern to the Armed Forces. Attending the meeting were His Royal Highness Prince Hamzah and Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Abdul Karim Kabariti.

Kabariti receives message from UAE

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti on Wednesday received at his office United Arab Emirates (UAE) Ambassador to Jordan Ahmad Ali who relayed to him a message from UAE Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Hamdan Ben Zayed on bilateral relations and issues of common concern. Mr. Ali expressed appreciation of Jordan's efforts to strengthen Arab solidarity.

Khamenei rejects dialogue with U.S.

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran's paramount leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei rejected on Wednesday a U.S. offer for dialogue, saying his country would "eternally" fight the "great Satan." The proposal "is an old tactic to increase pressure" on Iran and "our nation will continue to fight against the United States," Ayatollah Khamenei said, quoted by the state television.

Cairo morgue chief held for selling eyes

CAIRO (AFP) — The mortuary director of a Cairo public hospital has been arrested for removing eyes from cadavers and selling them for transplant surgery, the Al Akhbar newspaper reported Wednesday. Gamal Qoth, the mortuary director for the Qasr Al Ainal Hospital here, was arrested on Tuesday, the newspaper said. He was arrested after the relatives of several people who died at the hospital complained that the eyes had been removed from the bodies of their loved ones.

Alleged Gemayel killers indicted

BEIRUT (R) — A Lebanese magistrate is demanding the death penalty for two members of a pro-Syrian leftist group charged with planning and carrying out a bombing that killed President-elect Bashir Gemayel in 1982. Investigating judge Sa'ed Mirza on Tuesday officially charged Habib Charouni, a member of the Syrian Social National Party (SSNP), with planning and setting off the bomb and Nabil Al Alam, the SSNP's security official, of masterminding the assassination. Both are at large.

21 killed, 50 injured in Somali attack

MOGADISHU (AFP) — At least 21 people were killed and 50 wounded Wednesday when militants of Somali warlord Osman Hassan Ali Ato attacked and occupied an airstrip 50 kilometres south of Mogadishu, survivors said. Ato forces used more than eight armed wagons known as technicals to attack the airport, which was under the control of rival warlord Hussein Mohammad Aidede, they added. The lightning attack came as planes were landing at the airstrip to deliver aid, green narcotic leaves, from Kenya. The wounded were mainly tea dealers and clients from tea kiosks that sell the mild narcotic plant around the airport.

Kurdish peace talks get off to 'good start'

ANKARA (Agencies) — U.S.-mediated peace talks between Iraqi Kurd factions made a good start here Wednesday, delegates said, as Turkey looked forward to the reopening of an oil pipeline if stability returns to northern Iraq. "We are working very hard. There are a number of difficult issues but the environment and the statements are all good," U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Affairs Robert Pelletreau told reporters during a break.

Both Turkish and U.S. officials have indicated that the primary goal of the talks was to establish a lasting peace deal that would allow an oil-for-food deal between the U.N. Security Council and Iraq to be implemented.

Turkish Deputy Foreign Minister Onur Oymen, leading his country's delegation in the talks, agreed that "the talks are taking place in a good atmosphere."

The meeting, in which British diplomats and representatives of northern Iraq's Turkmen minority were also taking part, is to continue on Thursday, a foreign ministry source said.

The meeting brought together senior officials of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) of Massud Barzani and Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of

Kurdistan (PUK) at a Turkish state guest house.

Sami Abdul Rahman, the KDP's deputy leader, and Mohammad Tawfiq, a member of the PUK politbureau, headed their teams. "We're here to consolidate the ceasefire and work with you to stabilise the situation in northern Iraq for the benefit of all the peoples of northern Iraq," Mr. Pelletreau said at the opening of the talks.

The Ankara meeting marked the first direct talks between the rival Kurdish groups since September 1995, when they met in Ireland.

Mr. Pelletreau will seek an unconditional continuation of a truce holding since last Thursday and urge the KDP and PUK to cut off links with Baghdad and Tehran, respectively, diplomats said.

"If this first meeting is successful, then efforts will be launched to bring Mr. Barzani and Mr. Talabani together at a face-to-face meeting," one diplomat said.

"The two groups will be told that if stability is reached, then U.N. Security Council Resolution 986 (allowing limited oil sales by Iraq) will be put into force and that the Kurds will greatly benefit from this," the source added.

Resolution 986, accepted by all sides in principle, allows Iraq to sell \$2 bil-

lion worth of oil every six months.

The money from the oil sales would be spent on food and medicine for the Iraqi people, suffering from a U.N.-imposed embargo on Baghdad since its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Turkish Foreign Minister Tansu Ciller said peace in northern Iraq would "prepare the ground" for the reopening, under Resolution 986, of the Iraqi pipeline into Turkey — a lucrative source of income for Ankara.

She also hailed the participation in the Ankara talks by the Turcomans, Iraq's third-largest community after the Arabs and Kurds, saying it was "the first time they are represented on an international platform."

Bui Iraq itself blamed the U.S. mediation.

"The United States is not looking for a radical settlement likely to establish peace in northern Iraq, but trying to use it as a basis for launching operations hostile to this country," said the ruling party's daily Al Thawra.

Fighting erupted in northern Iraq in late August as Mr. Barzani's forces, backed by Iraqi troops, took the "Kurdish capital" of Erbil from the PUK and gained control of most of northern Iraq.

Palestinians say negotiations remain deadlocked over non-Hebron issues

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Negotiations on Israel's long-delayed withdrawal from Hebron remained deadlocked Wednesday due to Israel's refusal to discuss its other unfulfilled commitments under the Oslo Peace accords, Palestinian officials said.

"There is only one obstacle to agreement and that is Israel's attempt to change the Oslo accords and their refusal to discuss issues other than Hebron," chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erakat said Wednesday after another overnight session of fruitless talks in Tel Aviv.

Mr. Erakat said the negotiations must not be limited to Hebron but also include Israel's unfulfilled pledges to permit the opening of an airport in the Gaza Strip, withdraw troops from certain rural areas of the West Bank, release Palestinian prisoners and open free transit corridors between

self-rule areas of the West Bank and Gaza.

"In tonight's meeting in Tel Aviv, we will again demand that all these issues be discussed in parallel," Mr. Erakat said. Israeli negotiators were not immediately available for comment, but they have steadily insisted in recent days that differences over the Hebron withdrawal must be resolved before other issues can be tackled.

The two sides have for three weeks been engaged in intensive U.S.-mediated talks on completing implementation of the 1995 Oslo accords on extending Palestinian self-rule.

The accords were signed by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel's previous Labour government but have been frozen by the new rightist regime of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on grounds the original Oslo blueprint does not provide sufficient guarantees for

Israel's security.

Concerning Hebron, the last major West Bank town under Israeli occupation and the key test of Mr. Netanyahu's willingness to pursue the peace process, Israel has demanded changes to the Oslo plan to give it greater powers to protect 420 militant Jewish settlers living amid the city's 120,000 Palestinians.

U.S. envoy Dennis Ross broke off a marathon effort to mediate an agreement between the two sides on Monday, leaving the talks in the hands of U.S. Ambassador Martin Indyk.

Mr. Ross's departure was seen by many as signalling an at least temporary breakdown in the talks, although Mr. Indyk insisted Tuesday that the process is continuing. No agreement is expected however before Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat returns from a tour of Europe this weekend.

Crown Prince ends Czech visit seen as highly successful in boosting bilateral ties

Special from Prague

HIS ROYAL Highness Crown Prince Hassan concluded yesterday a three-day programme-packed visit to the Czech Republic, the first by a Jordanian leader, with both sides hailing the outcome as a major step towards strengthening ties, both on the bilateral and multilateral levels.

The Crown Prince left Prague expressing hope that his talks with President Vaclav Havel and other Czech leaders would signal the rebirth of old ties between the two countries and be the beginning of a new effort to bring closer Central European and Middle Eastern thinking on regional and international cooperation.

During a private dinner held on Tuesday by the Czech president in honour of the Crown Prince, Princess Sarvath, Princess Rahma and Prince Rashid, the two leaders contacted His Majesty King Hussein in Amman and agreed on the need for the two heads of state to meet, most probably in Amman in April, and to strengthen the dialogue even further.



Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Hassan, Princess Sarvath and Princess Rahma listen to a guide at the Old Town Square in Prague on Wednesday (Reuters photo)

The Crown Prince had extended an invitation to Mr. Havel to visit Jordan and it was agreed that the visit would be made during a Middle East tour that the Czech leader is planning but no date had been set until Wednesday's telephone call with King Hussein.

"The Crown Prince's visit

has been highly successful." First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Alexander Voodra told the Jordan Times. "Increased cooperation and understanding between us is central to the effort of maintaining stability and moderation in our two regions," he said. "In this respect we highly regard the visit of the

Crown Prince, and we are sure his talks with the president has advanced that cause forward."

Other than holding official talks here, the Crown Prince delivered lectures at a prestigious organisation, the Bohemian Foundation, and at an old institution of

(Continued on page 7)

Settlers threaten to open fire on Palestinian police

HEBRON (AFP) — Jewish extremists threatened Wednesday to open fire on Palestinian police if they try to enter Jewish areas of Hebron after an eventual Israeli troop withdrawal from the West Bank city.

The threat was made in a handbill distributed among settlers living here and the nearby settlement of Kiryat Arba and was apparently part of a campaign by right-wing radicals to torpedo any government move to hand most of Hebron over to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) as required by the Oslo peace accords.

"Directions on how to behave towards a terrorist to a police uniform," read the headline of the leaflets signed by the movement Dov, which means "eliminating traitors" in Hebrew.

"One does not need great sacrifice to destroy the agreements in Hebron. There are other ways to create friction that will harm them," said the group, believed to be made up of members of the outlawed anti-Arab Kach Movement.

The tract added that "terrorist" Palestinian police are not allowed into Jewish areas of Hebron "with a drawn weapon. If you see a terrorist like this, you can

open fire to defend yourself."

It said settlers should try to provoke Palestinian policemen elsewhere in the city by "cursing and spitting at them."

Kach was outlawed following the February 1994 massacre by a Jewish settler, Baruch Goldstein, 30 worshippers at Hebron's Ibrahim Mosque.

While Dov represents the extremist fringe of the Hebron settlement movement, other settler leaders have stepped up their warnings in recent days that an Israeli withdrawal will lead to bloodshed in the volatile city.

"There are people who might do desperate things," said Naom Arnon, a spokesman for settlers living in central Hebron. "I'm not for it, but I warn and I fear that it might happen."

"Everyone talks about Baruch Goldstein, but it must be remembered that what he did was the result of desperation," he said.

Israeli security officials have said in recent days that action must be taken to prevent Jewish extremists from trying to prevent the Hebron withdrawal by sparking Israeli-Arab violence.

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Russia supports EU role in peace process

CAIRO (Agencies) — Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov pledged here Wednesday that Moscow would throw its full weight behind the Middle East peace process and backed a role for the European Union (EU).

"We will make the maximum effort," he said at a joint news conference after talks with Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa, "to assure the continuation of the negotiations and the peace process."

Mr. Primakov said that Moscow, co-sponsor along with Washington of the peace process launched at the Madrid conference in 1991, "welcomes any reactivation of a European role."

"This shows that we are moving toward a world where no single power is dominant," he said, referring to the United States.

Mr. Primakov said that Russia would "maintain its policy of insisting on the importance of adhering to the basic principles" of the peace process and "the agreements concluded."

The Russian foreign minister, who arrived the same day from Beirut, was to meet Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak later

AMMAN (Petra) — Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov Friday will pay an official visit to Jordan. Mr. Primakov will hold talks with senior Jordanian officials on bilateral relations, issues of common concern and the current situation in the region as well as the peace process.

Wednesday in the Red Sea resort of Sharm Al Sheikh.

It was "impossible to come to a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East without Egypt's contribution," he said.

Mr. Musa said that Mr. Primakov's tour of the region, which began Monday in Damascus, "comes at a time when every effort must be made to put the peace process back on track, in line with the agreed-on principles, especially the exchange of land (by Israel) for peace."

Egypt has called for Russia, largely overshadowed by the United States since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, to reassume its responsibilities as co-sponsor.

Experts agree on need to amend electoral law, but differ on specifics

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Politicians, academics and former ministers agreed on the need for changes in the current one-person, one-vote system in a two-day seminar which opened Wednesday at the University of Jordan.

Participants called for either minor amendments to the current formula or a radical shift to a completely different system, but they all expressed concern over the election law slated for passage prior to the next year's general elections.

The seminar, entitled "Electoral Law: Comparative Analyses" and organized

by the Centre for Strategic Studies, offered an overview of electoral possibilities and positive and negative outcomes of a wide variety of formulae, ranging from the plurality and majoritarian to the semi-proportional or proportional representation systems.

The presentations by internationally well-known guest lecturers, who also offered a first-hand account of their own experience as observers or advisors in elections recently held in "merging democracies," such as South Africa and the Palestinian self-rule area, set the tone for the debate on Jordan's case and needs.

Participants were divided over the 1993 election law, under which the current Parliament was elected and proposed different amendments to the current system.

The one-person, one-vote formula, criticised by almost all the opposition groups, from the Islamic Action Front to the leftist socialist democratic and communist parties, for "encouraging tribalism."

"In reality, produced a Parliament with less tribal representatives than the previous one," said political researcher and marketing consultant Tony Sabbagh. Addressing the seminar

with a summary of the debate currently taking place in view of next November's general elections, Mr. Sabbagh said that tribal candidates accounted for 64 per cent in the 1989-1993 legislature, while they account for 50 per cent in the current 12th Parliament.

The 11th Parliament, elected with a plurality system in which each voter could express a number of preferences equivalent to the number of parliamentary seats reserved to the district in which he/she was registered, "was not (therefore) more representative than the current one," Mr. Sabbagh said.

He stressed that "in absence of political parties, the one-person, one-vote system allows a fair representation."

The need for boosting the role of political parties as a pre-requisite to the development of democracy and, therefore, to "free and fair elections," was the focus of many contributions by speakers and attendants at the seminar.

"There cannot be democracy with just any kind of elections," stressed specialist in electoral systems and electoral behaviour Jorgen Elkitt, from the University of Aarhus, Denmark.

Prof. Elkitt, who was also member of the South

African Independent Elections Commission for the conduct of the 1994 South African elections, described the primary functions of an electoral system, stressing on the different methods for seats distribution and boundaries drawing.

Given that legitimacy, political integration and capability of producing a representative government as well as an effective and constructive opposition are the "criteria for the assessment of electoral systems," Prof. Elkitt pointed out that there are two possible ways to draw the constituencies: creating one single national electoral district, (as it is

the case in Israel, for example), or dividing the country in various districts, "either artificially drawn or according to political-administrative divisions."

After Prof. Elkitt had explained that "many countries allocate seats proportionally, according to the population density in each district," former Minister and President of the Legal Committee of Parliament Abdul Ra'ouf Rawabdeh argued that "especially in consideration of the regional and internal instability, population density should be the only criteria to draw constituencies in the still

(Continued on page 7)

Jordan and Israel agree to open new consular sections

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan and Israel Wednesday agreed to establish consular sections to offer free, day-long visas in Aqaba and Eilat, with the possibility of commencing operations as early as January, officials announced Wednesday evening.

Head of the Aqaba Regional Authority Fayez Khasawneh told the Jordan Times that the Aqaba-Eilat Joint Committee — outlined in the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty — reached "milestone" decisions in boosting cultural and economic exchanges between the two countries.

Mr. Khasawneh said that the committee decided that each country would host a non-resident consul to facilitate visa issuance procedures. This means that Jordanian travellers to Eilat can apply for visas in Aqaba. As it stands, tourists seeking a visa to either Jordan or Israel must apply at embassies located in Amman — a 335 kilometre drive from Aqaba — or Tel Aviv.

"So if you are applying for a visa to Israel — which takes about three or four days — you have to make two trips," said Mr. Khasawneh. "One to apply and one to go and retrieve it. This, obviously, will make it much easier."

Apparently, Jordanians will be able to save money as well as time. Mr. Khasawneh, who is also the head of the Jordanian delegation to the joint committee, affirmed that the visa will be issued free of charge to both foreigners and Jordanians wishing to travel between the two cities. This decision was taken in order to reduce the exit fee in each country from \$17 (on the Israeli side) and \$6 (on the Jordanian side) to \$5. A visa to Israel issued in Amman currently costs \$23.



QUEEN GREETES CHILD AT SEMINAR: Queen Noor attends a seminar to mark the 10th anniversary of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation's Institute for Child Health and Development, covering a wide range of topics from family participation in child development to disability screening techniques (Petra photo)

Queen participates in seminar on maternal and child health services

AMMAN (J.T.) — To mark the 10th anniversary of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation's Institute for Child Health and Development (ICHHD), Her Majesty Queen Noor Wednesday patronised a seminar on "Maternal and Child Health Service: Today and Tomorrow" at the Philadelphia Hotel.

According to a Royal Court statement, the two-day seminar, which focuses on supporting efforts to raise the standard of maternal and child health services in the Kingdom, covers a wide range of topics, including: current neonatal nursing trends, psychological aspects of pregnancy, investing in early childhood development as well as a proposal to establish a regional training centre for maternal and child health services in Jordan.

Queen Noor met with seminar participants and emphasised the importance of early examinations, intervention and occupational therapy, which can prevent any detected disability from turning into a serious physical, sensory or mental handicap.

She explained that the joint campaign of the Ministry of Health and the ICHHD to introduce "developmental screening" to national maternal and child health centres will play a vital role in the prevention and early detection of childhood disabilities, the statement said.

According to ICHD Director Dr. Hind Duwany, the Institute was founded in 1986 with the support of "Radda Barnen" (the Swedish "Save the Children") to raise child health care standards in Jordan by improving growth monitoring, diagnosis and treatment practices. It is the first and only facility to monitor and assess child growth and development and conduct primary field research among children, while providing information to parents and teachers to increase awareness of early signs of childhood diseases and disabilities.

The statement said that the institute includes a model Mother and Child Health (MCH) Clinic and also has a Child Development Unit, which provides development assessment and supervision of minor



MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HOUSING SPONSORS ARCHITECTURAL COURSE: Secretary of Public Works and Housing General Bashir Jagbeer Wednesday distributes diplomas to 94 engineers who took part in an architectural course, organised jointly by the ministry and the Engineers Association (Petra photo)

VTC encourages training to fill job niches

AMMAN (Petra) — The government created the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC) to graduate skilled workers and it has introduced legislation designed to meet the requirements of local businesses, Minister of Labour Abdul Hafez Shakhanbeh said Wednesday.

Opening a workshop designated to promote the vocational training centre at Sahab Industrial City, the minister further explained that the government seeks to upgrade and streamline training courses to cater to factory needs at Sahab Industrial City.

"Government work complements that of the private sector and both seek to serve the national economy," said the minister who referred to recent government measures directed toward industrial investment encouragement.

Furthermore, he stated, the government has modernised labour laws to create better worker incentives while the VTC pursues occupational training in order that Jordanians qualify for jobs which are currently held by guest workers.

This is necessary, Mr. Shakhanbeh, that unemployment might be stemmed. The minister maintained that presently Jordan houses more than 300,000 guest workers which number, he said, pushes the government to boost the work of the VTC.

WHAT'S GOING ON

- FILMS**
- "Monte" at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman, on Thursday at 8 p.m.
 - "Caravaggio and the Baroque" (with commentary in Arabic by Amr Al Sharif) at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh on Thursday at 8 p.m.
 - "Magnifique" at the Royal Cultural Centre on Thursday at 8:00 p.m.
- EXHIBITIONS**
- Exhibition of works by Zurich-based Jordanian artist Nahil Sheh at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh. Also displaying works by Jordanian artist Mohammad Nasrallah and works by contemporary artists, until Nov. 13.
 - Endless Weaving and New Creations — Home Furnishings and Accessories at the Jordan Crafts Development Centre (Al Aydi), Jabal Amman, Second Circle, until Nov. 10.
- EXHIBITION / SALE**
- Exhibition/sale of antiques and crafts at Um El Kundum, Airport Road, off the Arabian Horse Club on Friday.
- *Jordan Industries Exposition at Amman International Auto Exhibition, Airport Road, until Nov. 1.**
- *Abstract (plastic) art by Sa'id Haddadin at Orfali Art Gallery, Um Utheina, until Nov. 5.**
- *Bani Hamida Women's Weaving Project '96 fall exhibition "Race the Trend" at Citroen-Dirani Showroom, Shmeisani until Nov. 3.**
- *Exhibition entitled "Jerusalem-Domes, Doors and Windows" comprising photos by Julia Reinhold and paintings by Riham Ghassib at the Gallery, the Inter-Continental Hotel, until Oct. 31.**
- **Wadi Al Faynan Art Exhibition — works by several artists inspired by Wadi Faynan at Balka Art Gallery, until Oct. 31.**

National Electric Power Company confirms progress in grid network

AMMAN (J.T.) — National Electric Power Company (NEPCO) Director Mohammad Saeed Arafah Wednesday announced that the national electricity company directors in Jordan and four other Middle Eastern countries are meeting in Damascus Saturday to prepare for the formal signing of an agreement linking their respective power grids.

Mr. Arafah, who will lead the Jordanian delegation to the meeting, said that his team along with those of Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Turkey will form a technical committee whose job it is to prepare the groundwork for the Nov. 6 meeting during which ministers of these same countries will sign the linkage contract.

According to Chief Engineer of NEPCO Mohammad Azzam, during the two-day meeting the ministers will discuss the linkage process which will take place between 1997 and 2002.

The future agreement will determine the financial and technical nature of both the management and operation of the grids network, he added, stating that ensuring auxiliary agreements will be concluded between pairs of neighbouring countries.

Mr. Azzam explained the agreement as the fruit of hard work by the joint technical committee which have been holding meetings in Cairo and Damascus over the past two years.

The committee had been conducting a feasibility study regarding the construction of a centre to monitor and coordinate exchanges among the five nations. The linkage project is being implemented in stages, Mr. Azzam said, between each pair of the neighbouring countries. Egypt and Jordan have granted tenders for construction of their section (of the network) and for the submarine cable which will link the two sides in the manufacturing process.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Jordan, Romania discuss winter produce exports

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and Romania Wednesday discussed the possibility of signing a cooperation protocol stipulating the export of fresh fruits and vegetables to Romania during the winter season. Jordanian Minister of Agriculture Mustafa Shneikat met with Romanian Ambassador to Jordan Ioan Agaffichioaie to discuss the idea. They also reviewed Romanian experiences in the privatisation of the agricultural sector and agricultural industries.

Medical delegation heads for Algeria

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Health Aref Bataneh yesterday led a medical delegation to Algeria in order to discuss medical cooperation between the two countries. The delegation includes representatives from the public and private medical sectors as well as the Royal Medical Services and is expected to focus on promoting health cooperation. The group will also deliberate making arrangements for a number of Algerians to be treated in the Kingdom. The delegation will brief officials on the state of the Jordanian pharmaceutical industry and the possibility of marketing medicaments in the North African country. Head of the Jordanian Federation of Drug Producers Anis Muasher is among the delegation.

Dutch delegation to arrive in Amman

AMMAN (Petra) — A visiting Dutch economic delegation hailing from the Amsterdam and Rotterdam Chambers of Industry and Trade and the Dutch Business Council for the Middle East is scheduled to arrive in Amman today. The delegation, which represents about 20 industrial companies, will be meeting with Jordanian officials.

Drug seizure worth JD1.5m reported

AMMAN (Petra) — Anti-Narcotics Department's forces Wednesday reportedly seized 10 kilograms of heroin and 160,000 captagon pills worth approximately JD 1.5 million.

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Rwanda and Zaire trade artillery and warnings

BUKAVU, Zaire (R) — Zairean and Rwandan soldiers traded artillery fire across their border Wednesday, fuelling fears of a widening central African conflict that has already forced half a million refugees to flee camps.

Zaire warned Rwanda it would fight to defend its territory and its vast mineral wealth against its small eastern neighbour.

Rwanda's military strongman repudied by threatening to retaliate against the Zairean shelling which he said had killed many people in the Rwandan border town of Cyangugu.

For the first time since ethnic warfare erupted in eastern Zaire two weeks ago, Zairean and Rwandan soldiers Tuesday exchanged sustained mortar and machinegun fire across the river that divides the Zairean town of Bukavu from the Cyangugu area.

Aid workers reported more firing Wednesday. "There was a heavy exchange of artillery fire that lasted about two hours this morning. It is quiet right now," said Brenda Barton of the World Food Programme in Nairobi.

Ms. Barton, after speaking to contacts in Cyangugu, said a hotel had been hit by a mortar bomb. She had no word of casualties.

"If Zaire brings the war to us we shall fight Zaire," Rwandan Vice-President Paul Kagame told a news conference in the Rwandan capital Kigali.

"That is not a big problem for me. We are ready to fight even though we seek no war with Zaire," said Gen. Kagame, who is also defence minister and led Tutsi rebels to power in 1994.

Asked if he would take direct military action against Zaire, Gen. Kagame replied: "There is no question about that. I still have to think about it how to do it but if you slap me in the face I have to respond."

Zaire has accused the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan army of supporting ethnic Tutsi Banyamulenge rebels fighting the Zairean army in eastern Zaire. Rwanda denies the accusation.

Zairean Foreign Minister Kitidwa Tumansi appeared on state television after Tuesday's fighting to repeat Zaire's charges against Rwanda of territorial ambition.

"Zaire warns those who think the time has come to carve out new political and economic entities with hegemonic designs on its precious and strategic materials," Mr. Kitidwa said.

Fighting between Zairean troops and Tutsi rebels

known as Banyamulenge has created the most serious refugee crisis in Africa since apocalyptic massacres and civil war in Rwanda in 1994 sent two million people fleeing into nearby states.

Most of the latest refugees on the move are Rwandan Hutus. Thousands are former soldiers and militiamen who took part in the 1994 massacre of up to a million minority Tutsis and their sympathisers in Rwanda before Gen. Kagame's rebels drove them out.

"The worrying part about these 500,000 refugees is that there really is no assistance. We don't even know whether they have access to water," said U.N. refugee agency spokesman Panos Mountzias from the Zairean town of Goma.

Even refugees still in camps are receiving minimal food aid because the U.N. is afraid that supplies will soon run out.

"The roads are blocked. Nothing is coming in. We are really very anxious," said Mr. Mountzias.

"Warehouses are very low in terms of food. Our understanding is that there is enough food for eight days ... Right now what we are giving out is the absolute minimum to sustain life."

The U.N. is trying to avoid a repeat of 1994,

when thousands died daily of cholera and dysentery in eastern Zaire camps.

At Mugunga camp, near the east Zaire city of Goma, 400,000 refugees have crowded into the world's biggest, most densely packed camp and the priority is to avert epidemics.

"Seventy-four teams with 10 men in each dug a total of 400 latrines there yesterday. Of course, that is nothing. We need a lot more," said Mr. Mountzias.

"But it is amazing that they managed to do so much in one day because the land is volcanic rock."

He said children under five had been given high-protein biscuits at Mugunga Tuesday. Workers found 36 severely malnourished children, who were now being treated.

The Tutsi rebels, whose ancestors settled in what is now eastern Zaire some 200 years ago, say they are fighting against ethnic discrimination and violence. They have taken the town of Uvira and threaten to overrun the South Kivu provincial capital of Bukavu.

Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko, who is being treated for cancer in Switzerland, has sought to reassert his authority by placing the two Kivu provinces under military rule.



German Chancellor Helmut Kohl (left) reviews the honour guard upon his arrival at the Manila International Airport Tuesday to begin a three-day official visit to the Philippines. Officials said about \$1 billion worth of business deals are expected to be signed between German and Filipino businessmen during the visit. Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Arturo Enrile salutes at right (Reuters photo).

Kohl vows to make European integration will be irreversible

MANILA (R) — German Chancellor Helmut Kohl Wednesday vowed to make European integration irreversible and dismissed claims it would lead to a superstate where national cultures vanished.

Mr. Kohl, speaking at the Ateneo De Manila University in the Philippine capital after receiving an honorary doctorate of humanities, also called for international cooperation in the war against drugs and organised crime.

"We intend to make European integration irreversible so that young people in Europe never have to go to war again," said Mr. Kohl, who is to enter the record books next week as Germany's longest-serving chancellor.

"To be sure, there will always be differences of opinion but we must and want to resolve them together peacefully."

He said that from time to time, "one reads or hears the ridiculous claim that European integration is about creating a European superstate which will eliminate all distinctive cultural features."

But that is not the Europe its proponents dream of, "nor is it the Europe which I want."

"Unity in diversity — that is our future," Mr. Kohl said.

Mr. Kohl said Germany was willing to join other nations towards "mastering global challenges, such as the fight against unemployment, drug abuse and rising international crime."

"More and more countries are realising that confrontation, as well as isolation, no longer have a place in the age of globalisation," he said, adding this applied not only in the economic

sphere.

"Every country is well advised within the context of international politics to seek cooperation with others and to refrain from shows of strength," he said.

Mr. Kohl began the second day of a three-day visit to the Philippines by flying to the northern town of Baguio, known for its extensive vegetable farms, in mountainous Benguet province.

But a steady drizzle and overcast skies forced officials to cancel what should have been the highlight of his trip — an aerial tour of the centuries-old banana terraces used to grow rice in the Benguet mountains.

On Tuesday, German and Filipino businessmen signed business deals worth nearly \$1 billion, crowning Mr. Kohl's first day in the Pacific country.

Meanwhile workers in Cotabato, the seat of the MNLF-led Muslim autonomous region in the south, went on strike Wednesday to protest at rampant kidnappings in the region, officials said.

Many of the gang of outlaws prey on the local business community taking Indian Airlines are believed to be rogues local airlines. Reuters photo.

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45 die in campaign south Philippines

ZAMBOANGA, Philippines (AFP) — Government troops seized a landslide win after three days of heavy fighting which claimed at least 45 lives in the southern region of Mindanao, the military said Wednesday.

The clashes with Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) faction posed the fragile nature of the peace which President Fidel Ramos won a month in a peace treaty with the region's separatist Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

The army announced the capture of the MILF commander on the island of Basilan, only days after Manila said it would begin peace talks with the MILF.

The battle around town of Tipo-Tipo left at least 40 MILF members and five soldiers dead, eight other government troops wounded, southern military command spokesman Major Fredesvic Covarrubias said.

About 700 civilians, mostly Yakan tribesmen, fled their homes to escape the ground skirmishes and air raids. An MILF rocket also crippled an army two-carrier, he said, adding the soldiers were looking to remaining MILF members in several villages around Tipo-Tipo.

The MILF, with an officially estimated 10,000 fighters, is the last major insurgent group still fighting in the Mindanao. The MILF is a splinter group of the MNLF, which ended its 24-year armed struggle in exchange for the grant of a large measure of autonomy to the Muslim minority in the south.

Meanwhile workers in Cotabato, the seat of the MNLF-led Muslim autonomous region in the south, went on strike Wednesday to protest at rampant kidnappings in the region, officials said.

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Russian President Boris Yeltsin (left) meets with pioneering U.S. heart surgeon Michael DeBakey in Moscow's exclusive Central Clinical Hospital in this file photo. Dr. DeBakey said in Houston that surgery on Mr. Yeltsin's heart might be performed next week, although no exact date had been set (Reuters photo).

Yeltsin's heart operation nears; political row erupts

MOSCOW (R) — Doctors entered the countdown for Russian President Boris Yeltsin's heart operation Wednesday as a new row among top politicians threatened to spark further in-fighting while he is under the surgeon's knife.

U.S. heart specialist Michael DeBakey, who will be a consultant at the bypass operation, said he expected to meet Mr. Yeltsin's doctors next Monday and surgery could take place as early as next week.

"We're shooting for next week, but I can't be any more specific than that because we'll probably be meeting Monday with the medical team and making that decision," he said.

But as the 65-year-old Yeltsin waited in the exclusive Barvikha Sanatorium outside Moscow for the doctors to decide on a date, a row erupted between two members of a new council the president has set up to try to forge a consensus on important issues.

Mr. Yeltsin set up the four-member consultative council to work together during his operation and avert the damaging in-fighting which has characterised Russian politics since the president said on Sept. 5 he would have an operation.

But Gennady Seleznyov, Communist chief of the lower house of parliament, asked Mr. Yeltsin Wednesday to sack Chief-of-Staff Anatoly Chubais and said he would not work with the liberal economist on the council.

"I insist on the immediate dismissal of the president's head of administration Anatoly Chubais. I do not doubt that I am expressing the opinion of an absolute majority of Russian citizens," said a Seleznyov statement distributed in the State Duma of which he is chairman.

Mr. Yeltsin brought Mr. Chubais into the Kremlin in July as part of a reshuffle which removed several hardliners from his team.

Last week he named both Mr. Chubais and Mr. Seleznyov as members of the new council, along with Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and Yegor Stroyev, chairman of the upper house of parliament.

Mr. Chubais has long been a hate figure for Russia's Communists, who despise his

privatisation programme and the free-market economic reforms he helped to launch.

"We did not trust Mr. Chubais and his privatisation, we considered he did not deserve his (chief-of-staff) appointment and always said it would only worsen the situation in the country," Communist Party Chairman Gennady Zyuganov told a news conference.

Mr. Seleznyov made clear he blamed Mr. Chubais for Mr. Yeltsin's decision to appoint businessman Boris Berezovsky Tuesday as deputy secretary of the influential Russian security council.

"I categorically protest against the appointment of B. Berezovsky," his statement said.

The security council, chaired by Mr. Yeltsin, groups senior government ministers, including those of defence and the interior, and officials of the Federal Security Service (FSB), successor organisation of the Soviet-era KGB.

Businessman Berezovsky, 50, who has interests ranging from car dealerships to television, Wednesday underlined the importance of economic transformation to Russia's security.

"I think that my experience in this respect will be useful for the further progress of economic reforms in Russia," ITAR-TASS news agency quoted him as saying.

Mr. Yeltsin has already handed some powers over to Chernomyrdin and the prime minister will take charge during the operation, which will relieve clogged arteries supplying blood to Mr. Yeltsin's heart.

Dr. DeBakey, who carried out the world's first successful bypass surgery, said doctors were expecting three or four bypasses.

Dr. DeBakey, 88, said last month that U.S. President Bill Clinton had asked him to make himself available to the Russian team, which will be led by Russian cardiologist Anatoly Akhurin, and he has sent equipment from his Houston Centre to Moscow.

NATO chief wants early deal on ties with Russia

MOSCOW (R) — NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana said he hoped to sign a deal on future relations between Russia and the western alliance by the end of this year. Interfax news agency said Tuesday.

"In my opinion the name of the document is not important, though it may become important in the future," Mr. Solana told Interfax at NATO headquarters in Brussels. "The contents now appear an issue of bigger importance and we are working on them."

"In any case such a document will be signed before 1997 starts, or if we are lucky before the end of 1996," he added.

An official of Russia's policy-making Security Council signalled that Moscow would welcome such a document, saying that Mr. Solana had effectively been responding to an initiative of President Boris Yeltsin.

"The proposal of the president (for such a document) is a very wise political move allowing us to move out of this deadlock, this situation of confrontation," Vladislav Nasonov, who heads the council's information division, told ITAR-TASS news agency.

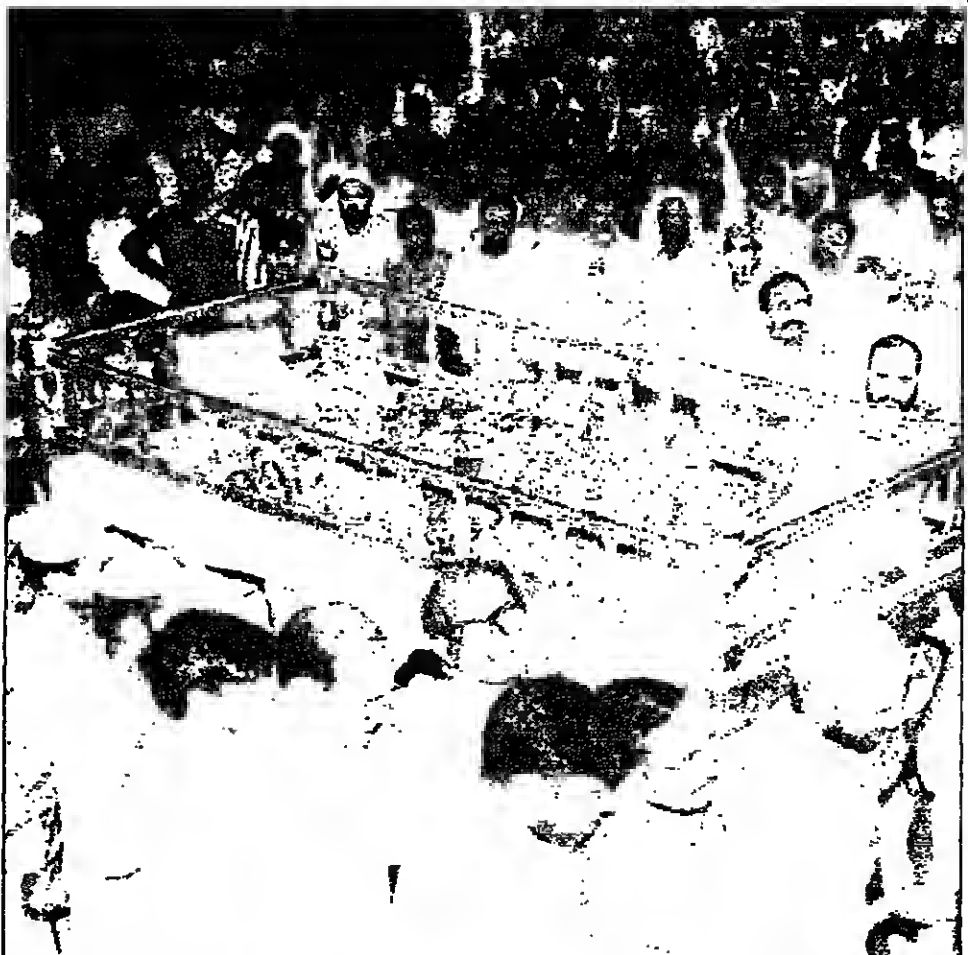
He added that Russia could not be frozen out of a future pan-European security arrangement. In the drawing up of such a document, Russia should not "give up its own security," he said.

Mr. Solana, outlining the planned document, said he wanted it to suit both Russia and NATO.

"One can imagine this document consisting of three parts, the first of which will be a declaration, the second will be a mechanism for consultations and the third a mechanism for cooperation," he said.

Moscow has denounced NATO's plans to expand to include the former Soviet bloc states in central and eastern Europe and says an enlarged NATO could threaten Russia's national security.

But it has taken calmly an announcement by U.S. President Bill Clinton that the first eastern European countries would join NATO by 1999, the 50th anniversary of the alliance.



Activists of the religious Jamaat-i-Islami party carry the coffin of Hafiz Mohammad Yousaf after funeral prayers in Lahore. Yousaf died in hospital after being seriously injured in a clash with police on Oct. 27 during an anti-government campaign (Reuters photo).

Former Pakistan Premier vows to inflict 'final blow' on Bhutto

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Pakistan's main opposition parties will hold a giant rally in nearby Rawalpindi next month to inflict the "final blow to corrupt rulers," former Premier Nawaz Sharif said in a statement Wednesday.

Mr. Sharif urged Pakistanis to throng to Rawalpindi on Nov. 12 for the "decisive round of struggle" to overthrow embattled Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

The fiery leader, who served as prime minister between 1990 and 1993, said the rally would be "the last nail in the coffin of the government and would pave the way for fresh elections."

Mr. Sharif, who heads a multi-party opposition

alliance, said opposition MPs have also decided to resign en masse from parliament to force President Farooq Ahmed Leghari to call new elections.

The businessman-turned-politician has accused the Ms. Bhutto government of corruption and economic mismanagement.

Ms. Bhutto, whose tenure ends in 1998, has rejected repeated opposition calls for snap polls, saying she would not relinquish power "under any pressure."

The decision to quit the federal and provincial assemblies was taken at a joint session of the opposition combine, grouping more than a dozen parties and religious organisations here Tuesday, party sources said.

The resignations will be submitted after obtaining "public approval" at the Rawalpindi rally, Mr. Sharif added.

The opposition offensive came two days after fierce clashes between police and activists of Pakistan's main fundamentalist Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) party here killed one person and injured scores of others.

The activists were trying to stage a sit-in outside parliament.

JI chief Qazi Hussain Ahmad has also announced an anti-government rally led by women in front of parliament on Nov. 11 to mount pressure on Ms. Bhutto, whose husband Industry Minister Asif Zardari is also facing corruption charges.

Japan's LDP

it would shut off city tap (AFP) — Japan's Friday in a sympathy protest Democratic Party test, while the Roman Catholic Church said church bells would be rung for 15 minutes every night in sympathy with the protest at the killing of two smaller parties.

"The killing of Mrs. Chua only a week to go for the highest degree of expected recondemnation and indignation of parliament to censure the prime minister to force the LDP to meet the newly-formed party official said.

"We are made to believe that there is already peace in our city. But recent events belied by talks with three will not be cowed," he said.

Ms. Chua, the wife of a growing expectations, local grocer, was slain in a Prime Minister Ryuder was also wounded in a bid to lead a minority kidnapped attempt.

Police said Ms. Chua was slain from 211 to 239 ping incidents in Mindanao, the party is still cases took place after the MNLF peace treaty.

Campaign enters final week; Clinton looks good for win

WASHINGTON (R) — The marathon U.S. election campaign entered its final week Tuesday with President Bill Clinton apparently heading for a landslide win over Republican Bob Dole but with control of Congress still in the balance.

After months of campaigning, polls suggest the White House race has come down to something of an anti-climax with Mr. Clinton seemingly gliding towards victory after an amazing comeback.

The latest Reuters tracking poll showed Mr. Clinton leading Sen. Dole by 12.6 percentage points, a lead that has barely changed since early August.

Mr. Clinton began the day in Columbus, Ohio, where he mocked a dozen Dole supporters who tried to heckle him with shouts of "Dole-Kemp" and "tell the truth."

"I bet you they won't be doing that a week from today," Mr. Clinton said, prompting laughter and cheers.

"We are not afraid of honest discussion and debate, so we don't have to shout our opponents down. But I

might be screaming if I had that kind of (Republican) record, either that or running for a rock to hide behind," Mr. Clinton said.

Sen. Dole in Irvine, California accused Mr. Clinton of harming America's prestige overseas and doing too little to spur the U.S. economy as he wrapped up a four-day campaign swing through the key state.

"You may have heard my opponent say he is building a bridge to the future ... So far as entrepreneurs and developers of new technologies are concerned, the Clinton administration is more like a wrecking crew than a bridge-builder," Sen. Dole said.

Two years after seeing his Democrats lose control of both houses of Congress in a humiliating personal rebuff to him, Mr. Clinton has managed to recapture the political centre by embracing a series of moderate initiatives — some of them originated by Republicans — while resisting more radical attempts to cut the growth of popular government programmes.

He squelched murmurs of a nomination challenge

from within his own party, stirred by that 1994 election debacle.

Then he cemented his strategy by appealing especially to women and senior citizens, portraying himself as a champion of education and a defender of health care for the old, the sick and the poor.

The Reuters poll showed Mr. Clinton reaping the benefits. He led Sen. Dole by more than two to one among those calling themselves moderates and by 16 points among white working women.

A new Clinton television advertisement encompassed the essence of his pitch to women with a blunt attack linking Sen. Dole to unpopular House of Representatives Speaker Newt Gingrich.

With a roll of drums in the background, an announcer intoned: "Newt Gingrich, Bob Dole — Dole-Gingrich: Against family leave, against a woman's right to choose (an abortion), Dole, Gingrich: cutting vaccines for children."

Many analysts say the big question next Tuesday will be whether Mr. Clinton's

coattails will be long enough to pull his party back into control of one or both houses of Congress.

Polls show the race there extremely close. Republicans hold a 53-47 majority in the Senate and a 235-197 majority in the House, with one independent and two seats vacant. But many Republicans who swept into office on the 1994 anti-Clinton surge are highly vulnerable as that tide ebbs.

Roll Call, a newspaper that focuses on Congress, rated as many as 12 of the 34 Senate races as too close to call. Dozens of House seats were in the same category.

Sen. Dole has been reduced to a last-ditch attempt to win the crucial state of California with its 54 electoral votes, one fifth of the minimum 270 needed for election in the indirect U.S. system. Meanwhile, Mr. Clinton plundered votes in the Republican-leaning south and solidified his lead in midwest states where presidential elections are often decided.

The Republican Party said it would ask a federal court for an injunction to freeze



President Bill Clinton greets a crowd of schoolchildren from the Immaculate Conception School in Clintonville, Ohio Tuesday after stopping along the side of the road on his way to the airport. Mr. Clinton spotted the children standing outside their school and had his motorcade stop so he could greet the children (Reuters photo)

Democratic spending until the party filed an overdue report on donations and spending.

The controversy erupted after Democrats initially

said they would not be filing a report on the party's contributions and expenditures for the first two weeks of October with the Federal Election Commission. Con-

necticut Sen. Christopher Dodd, the Democratic chairman, later promised all documents would be released soon.

The row follows two weeks

of reports that Mr. Clinton's campaign was taking questionable contributions from people associated with financial interests in Indonesia, S. Korea and Taiwan.



A firefighter sifts through rubble at the departure terminal of New Delhi's domestic airport after a fire broke out Wednesday. No injuries were reported in the blaze, which broke out at the terminal on the outskirts of New Delhi. Passengers taking Indian Airlines flights later in the day were to be routed through an adjacent terminal serving private local airlines (Reuters photo)

New Delhi airport terminal gutted in major fire

NEW DELHI (AFP) — A fire gutted one of the two domestic departure terminals at New Delhi's Airport Wednesday, forcing the diversion of several national and international flights, officials said.

Around 40 fire engines fought the blaze for nearly four hours after it broke out before dawn at a privately-run restaurant at the terminal for Airbus flights.

There were no injuries in the fire, Indian Airlines managing director P.C. Sen said,

adding that the flames were controlled before spreading to adjoining buildings, including the international terminal.

Airport director Harbans Kumar said 20 passengers due to fly to the southern city of Cochin as well as ground staff rushed out as fire alarms sounded.

He added six international flights were diverted to other airports while four international and 10 domestic flights were delayed due to the fire, which led to the

temporary closure of all terminals in the airport complex.

Both national and international terminals are linked by a common runway.

Mr. Kumar said an Air India flight from Kuwait was diverted to Bombay, while an unspecified chartered flight was asked to proceed to Karachi.

"The terminal has become completely inoperational," the director said. "The building will have to be rebuilt."

The authorities have

ordered an investigation. Mr. Kumar said the entire airport would have been crippled if the blaze had spread to power installations.

The Indian Airlines asked domestic passengers to use the adjoining domestic terminal.

Indian Airlines, one of the largest domestic carriers in the world, and its subsidiary alliances air operate 37 Airbus and Boeing flights daily from New Delhi.

Former Indian Premier charged in bribery case

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Former Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao was charged Wednesday with bribing four members of parliament during a confidence vote in parliament in 1993.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) filed charges against Mr. Rao and two of his aides over the payment of one million dollars to four regional politicians three years ago in exchange for their vote.

Special Judge Ajit Bhabhoke said his court would open a pre-trial hearing Friday.

The four Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM, Jharkhand Freedom Front) members of parliament are in prison on charges of holding huge sums of unaccounted money.

The two others named by the CBI were former federal ministers Bata Singh and Satish Sharma.

Mr. Rao earlier Wednesday appeared before Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Prem Kumar on forgery charges in an unrelated case.

Mr. Rao stands accused of masterminding the forgery of documents in 1989.

CIA plans for more covert action against guerrillas

WASHINGTON (R) — The Central Intelligence Agency has begun preparing to take more aggressive action against suspected foreign terrorist groups, including possible pre-emptive strikes, officials say.

CIA Director John Deutch announced last month that he was boosting the number of case officers sent abroad, putting more foreigners on his payroll as spies and giving the president more possibilities for covert action.

"We want to increase the president's options to act against terrorist groups directly, either to prevent them from carrying out operations or to retaliate against groups we know are responsible" for guerrilla attacks on U.S. interests, he said in a Sept. 5 speech at Georgetown University.

Since then President Bill

Clinton's administration has fine-tuned a more activist approach to combatting what aides call a mounting threat, especially from radical Muslim fundamentalists acting without apparent state sponsors.

The move comes after a recent wave of attacks: the suicide bombings that killed 59 people in Israel, in February and March, two blasts that killed a total of 24 U.S. servicemen in Saudi Arabia in the past year and the mysterious destruction of TWA Flight 800 in which terrorism has not been ruled out.

"Our responsibility is to do everything we can to prevent terrorist attacks, to bring to justice those who commit them, and, above all, to never let terrorism stop us from moving forward with our lives," a

senior U.S. official said.

In promoting the use of covert action, an issue Deutch first raised publicly in 1995, he said that Mr. Clinton's budget for counter-terrorist human intelligence — as distinct from spying through satellites and other technical means — had been sharply increased, but gave no figures.

"These investments have paid off," he said in his speech. "The CIA has substantially increased the number of new sources reporting to us about terrorist groups. The gain in the past 18 months far exceeds previous achievements."

Mr. Deutch identified the chief threats as the pro-Iranian Hizbollah Hamas, the Palestinian group and Egypt's Islamic group.

Japan's LDP woos new potential partners to govern

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) was poised Wednesday to begin talks with alternative coalition partners after failing to maintain its 28-month alliance with two smaller parties.

With only a week to go before the expected resumption of parliament to elect a prime minister following the Oct. 20 elections, the LDP was to meet with the newly-formed Democratic Party Thursday, party officials said.

The meeting, to be followed by talks with three breakaway lawmakers from the opposition New Frontier Party, coincides with growing expectations that Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto may be forced to lead a minority government.

While Mr. Hashimoto's LDP managed to boost its strength from 211 to 239 seats in the lower-house election, the party is still 12 seats short of a majority.

Its former junior coalition partners, the left-wing

Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the centrist New Party Sakigake, were both devastated in the election and have decided to remain outside the next cabinet.

But they have agreed to parliamentary cooperation with the LDP in certain areas, and a draft agreement was expected to be drawn up late Wednesday.

Areas of cooperation reportedly include deregulation, tax, women's issues and the historical assessment of Japan's wartime aggression. News reports said the draft provided for continued talks on security issues, the main sticking point with the sdp calling for the eventual withdrawal of American marines from the southern island of Okinawa.

In the meantime, the LDP was preparing for similar policy discussions with the Democratic Party, formed last month by defectors from the SDP and Sakigake including the popular Health and Welfare Minister Naoto Kan.

"During the first round of talks, we'd like to discuss policies where we can cooperate," a Democratic Party spokesman said.

The New Party, which has indicated possible support for the LDP from outside the cabinet, made deregulation a key pledge in its election platform, accusing the three ruling parties of merely paying lip service to the idea of reform.

"The Democratic Party won't be able to refuse cooperating with the LDP as that would give the impression that it is blocking administrative reforms," a former minister was quoted as saying in the Sankei Shimbun Wednesday.

LDP officials were also scheduled to meet Friday with former Minister Hajime Funada and two other lawmakers who were re-elected as independents after recently defecting from the opposition New Frontier Party.

News reports said all the talks were aimed at secur-

ing parliamentary support for certain policies as well as the re-election of Mr. Hashimoto on Nov. 7.

The New Frontier Party won 156 seats in the election, down from 160, while the Democratic Party managed to maintain its pre-election strength of 52 seats.

Further cracks appeared in the New Frontier Party Wednesday with the resignation of Kenzo Yoneda, a close aide to party leader Ichiro Ozawa when the party was launched two years ago.

A spokesman said Mr. Yoneda, who joined Mr. Ozawa and dozens of other disgruntled lawmakers in leaving the LDP in 1993, resigned during a meeting with party Secretary General Takeo Niishioka.

Mr. Yoneda had recently criticised Mr. Ozawa's "dogmatic" style of leadership and may return to the LDP, Jiji Press said.

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Politics of middle ground

THE VISIT of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan to Prague has broken new grounds not only in the sense that he was the first Jordanian leader to visit the Czech Republic but also in the impact it will have on bringing the Middle East and Eastern Europe that much closer. The attention of the Arab World has naturally centred till now on Western Europe with the Eastern European states occupying back seat in importance in the eyes of the Arab World. Even when Eastern European countries broke loose from the yoke of the communist order, regained their independence and established operational democracy, the eyes of the Arab capitals continued to look westward.

Prince Hassan arrived in the Czech capital therefore to rekindle Jordanian and Arab interest in Eastern Europe as a whole and the Czech Republic in particular and usher in a new era of understanding and cooperation. The construction of new bridges with Prague does not, of course, occur in a vacuum. As Prince Hassan has said in his lecture at the Bohemia Foundation Tuesday, Jordan and the Czech Republic have more in common than meets the eye. First, it is the common historical experience of the two countries. On one hand, Prague "endured the ravages of totalitarianism rule," between 1949 till 1989, and we in Jordan experienced the consequences of four decades of warfare and insecurity in the Middle East which produced effects that were similar to those often associated with undemocratic rule that was the curse of Prague and other capitals in its region. If that is not enough, we and the Czechs, the Prince pointed out, share another important commonality that found expression in our shared view of the world due not only to similar geographic positions as at crossroads in volatile regions of the world but more significantly because the leadership in both countries "represent the politics of the middle ground."

In retrospect, therefore, the visit of Prince Hassan and his talks with President Vaclav Havel was an eye-opener and a curtain raiser for more contacts not only between Amman and Prague but also between the Middle East and Eastern Europe. The "rediscovery" as it were, of a very important region of the world with tremendous resources both material and intellectual can only add to a more sane world order which may indeed lead to the articulation and eventual adoption of a new states conduct, stipulating the rights and obligation of each and every country especially those which Prince Hassan called the representatives of "the powerful lobby of the powerless."

As we continue to look at the bitter and sweet experiences of Eastern European nations for guidance in our continuous efforts to solve the lingering problems in the Middle East, we hope that the new era in relations that Prince Hassan's visit has ushered in between the two important regions will further develop to their mutual benefit in every conceivable field.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

HARDLY HAD the European Union nations announced the appointment of an envoy to follow up on matters related to the peace process than the Netanyahu government declared its outright rejection of the move, said Mahmoud Rimawi, a writer for Al Ra'i. It was expected from Israel to assume this behavior, having disregarded the mediation of its own ally, the U.S., prompting its envoy, Dennis Ross, to return to Washington empty handed, he noted. The Likud-led government insists that no outside party should have any say in the negotiations between the Jewish state and the Arabs because this government realises that it is militarily and economically stronger than its Arab adversaries and can easily impose its will and dictate its terms on them, said the writer. For its part, Washington had accepted to serve as a mere coordinator, succumbing to Israel's wishes; and in collusion with Israel it had shelved the Russian role in this region, added the writer. Therefore, it was not surprising to hear the Likud government reject any role by the Europeans and their envoy but, he said, the Europeans must have their own way of imposing their presence in this region because they would never accept the role of financiers of projects which remain at Israel's mercy and subject to Netanyahu's whims and desires.

IN VIEW of the early winter season that has descended abruptly in Jordan, one can expect from the Jordan Petroleum Refinery, the sole source of energy for the nation, to live up to expectations and prove its readiness to supply all regions with oil products, said a writer for Al Ra'i Wednesday. Though one would not expect shortages in the amounts of gasoline, which seems always abundant for the cars, diesel oil and kerosene could be in short supply, especially in towns and villages located in remote regions, said Nazzih. It goes without saying that people need the oil products in winter more than any other season and they all have the right to buy them whether they live in Amman or 100 kilometres away, said the writer. It is hoped that the refinery, acting on the experience of the previous years, will make available sufficient quantities of fuel for all regions, said the writer who suggested that the refinery establish three major depots for fuel, one in the north, the other in the centre and the third in the southern regions of Jordan, to facilitate authorities to ensure that gas cylinders and fuel inlets are not tampered with as has been reported by the authorities during previous winters.

The View from Academia

Pressure from all quarters is vital to push the peace process forward

By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdonbeh

THE CRUCIAL question at this point in time, for Middle Easterners and supporters of peace throughout our small globe, is: What should be done to compel the time-wasting, hard-to-pin-down, difficult-to-deal-with, nearly-impossible, and eternally-elusive present Israeli government to respect the rights of the Palestinian people, the wish of its Arab neighbours and "partners" in peace, the will of the international community, and the commitment of many, even in Israel itself, to the implementation of peace and the speeding up of the stalled, frozen peace process?

The answer, in the opinion of the vast majority of peace supporters (citizens and officials alike) appears to be fairly simple: pressure. What is not so simple, however, is what is meant by pressure and how it is to be brought about.

Most expect the pressure to come from the United States. For one thing, it is the one and only superpower now there are other powerful countries in the world, but they are at best mini-super powers, and it can exercise its might if and when it sees fit. Many people in this part of the world, and perhaps elsewhere, cannot believe that the country which was able to rally behind itself over thirty countries, of all shapes and sizes, during the Gulf war, and bomb the Iraqi capabilities out of existence cannot bend a little the arm of a disobedient Israeli premier for a good cause. For another, it has more interests in the Middle East region than in any other country.

Furthermore, since the relationship between Israel and U.S., in the words of many Americans and Israelis, and the discourse gets more intimate and even amorous during election time in the U.S., is a "special" relationship and since the U.S. is so "concerned" about the "security" and "well-being" of Israel and so supportive of it (financially, diplomatically and morally), why cannot the U.S. exercise some benign, gentle, caring, caressing pressure on Israel for the sake of "dear" Israel itself, first and foremost? Why can't American logic be modified a little and say that Israel should be pressured for its own interest? But America has also, over the past few years, developed strong ties and alliances with some Arab countries. Should it not do something for such allies, especially since nearly all America's interests in the region lie within the sphere of influence of these allies? Furthermore, does not America, in the aftermath of the cold war, want a stable Middle East?

Some are disappointed with the level of pressure America has been applying recently, especially those who, in the words of Professor Hisham Sharabi of Georgetown University, in a recent comment to the JTV programme "Events and Personalities," are still suffering from the so-called Eisenhower complex — i.e. that American presidents are capable of ordering Israel to withdraw from occupied Arab territories (in Netanyahu's case, to implement the agreements, redeploy from Hebron and move in the direction of peace more speedily) just as Eisenhower ordered Israel to withdraw from Sinai in the aftermath of

the tripartite invasion of Egypt in 1956. Many people in our part of the world still have Eisenhower fresh in their memories, and they still believe that America is somehow capable of ordering Israel to do this and that, and that it can exercise direct pressure on it.

In my opinion, such expectation is somewhat far fetched and unrealistic. Not only because of the approach of U.S. presidential elections but also because of the delicate, sensitive, peculiar and at times hard-to-understand relationship between Israel and the U.S.; the latter cannot (and therefore cannot be expected to) be as firm, direct and aggressive in its pressure on Israel the way it was on Iran, Panama, Grenada, Iraq, the Somali generals, the Serbs. Actually, a lot of people have had somewhat understandably and justifiably an Iran complex, a Panama complex, a Grenada complex, etc. Why can the U.S. apply (and the question is rhetorical) direct pressure in all of these cases but not in the case of Israel? A lot of people find it hard to understand.

Whatever the reasons are and whatever the rationale may be, America appears to be incapable of exercising the kind of pressure many of us cherish deep down. But does this mean that it is not capable of exerting effective pressure, or that it has not been doing so? The answer, in my opinion, is no. Since Madrid, the U.S. has been exercising effective pressure. The mere fact that it is seriously involved, that it is actively sponsoring, that it does care to have agreements signed and implemented is in itself positive. Think of an alternative scenario. What if Bush and Clinton had been Reagan? What, in other words, if the U.S. adopts a casual interest in peace in the Middle East, proposing a plan once in a while but leaving it up to the parties involved to get interested and to move at the pace they feel comfortable with? In other words, America's sheer involvement is a form of valuable pressure.

Indeed America's role as an active facilitator ought not to be underestimated. It may, in fact, be the best and most realistic approach to adopt, as Nabil Shaath has made clear in the said JTV programme Monday night. Since Madrid, the U.S. has provided a most fitting and perhaps most effective framework or umbrella for peace making. Those moments when it insisted on keeping the two parties working by themselves on differences and coming to an understanding were crucial to peace making. This approach worked with Egypt and Israel, with Jordan and Israel, with the Palestinians and Israel, and it would have worked with the Syrians and Israel had not the new Israeli government huffed in with its brutish, bullying attitude. One could in fact argue that Dennis Ross would have delivered something on Hebron had not the U.S. elections interfered again to disrupt and postpone things momentarily.

What is wanted, I believe, is for America (perhaps after the elections) to continue the same strategy, though a little more aggressively perhaps.

But what is also wanted is for pressure to come from within the Arab World, the international community, and

Israel itself. To rely on American pressure alone is neither healthy nor wise, for two main reasons. The Arab World needs to take advantage of the present stalemate or deadlock in the peace process and assert and affirm itself. Do we, as Arabs, exist or do we not? It is a question of to be or not to be, in my opinion. I believe that the Arab World of today is remarkably different from that of the sixties and seventies and, I would venture to say, better — more realistic, more mature, more practical, less emotional and less unreasonable.

If we have learned a lesson over the years, it is that solutions cannot be handed on a silver platter, that we have to work and sweat for what we aspire, that even the best of friends cannot give us what we want. Is not this the lesson we learned from the intifada? For years we were begging for solutions from the United Nations. It is only when the intifada happened (i.e. when we exercised self-reliance, when we learned how to throw stones — symbolic though they may be) that things began to move in the right direction.

The Arab World is not passive. His Majesty King Hussein's visit to Egypt a couple of days ago is an indication of the rallying of forces, of coordination and of indirect pressure which we all desire and want to see more of. The healthy positions the Arab countries have adopted with respect to normalisation with Israel — i.e. tying progress vis-a-vis openness to Israel to Israel's respect and implementation of peace agreements — are a form of mature, wise and valuable pressure and of excellent diplomacy. What we want, however, (and Hisham Sharabi is right here) is more coordination on the part of Arab peace partners and peace seekers. We need more than bilateral and trilateral Arab meetings.

The second reason is that when we exercise pressure ourselves, when we get involved more actively, when we urge world leaders (the Europeans, the Russians, the Japanese, the supporters of peace everywhere), we are actually consolidating the pressure exercised by America. America's "sponsorship" and "facilitation" of the implementation of peace will be more effective if it is complemented with pressure from within the Arab World, from within the international community, and from within Israel.

The latter is also crucial. The peace-loving, peace-wanting, and peace-benefiting (eventually) Israelis must get involved more actively now. The Peace-Now supporters are called upon to be more assertive and aggressive, and so are the political parties which support peace. There is an opportunity for the peace camp in Israel to pressure the government, to test its will and willingness to bring about peace, to force it to choose either between stepping aside, if it is incapable of implementing peace, or implementing the agreements and negotiating in good faith.

Pressure has to come from all those who seek peace, not just from the U.S. If momentum is to be restored to the peace process.

Corporate power is overwhelming

By Sarah Anderson and John Kavanagh

WASHINGTON — Of the 100 largest economies in the world, more than half are corporations, not countries. General Motors' sales are larger than the GNP of Denmark. Ford's are bigger than South Africa's. Toyota is bigger than Norway.

Large corporations say they are providing large numbers of jobs, hiring high-quality, low-cost goods to consumers worldwide, and linking people together into a global village that transcends geographic boundaries. U.S. government policies overwhelmingly serve the interests of these large firms, from corporate tax breaks to free trade pacts.

A study that we have written for the Institute for Policy Studies demonstrates, to the contrary, that the concentration of economic power in a relatively small number of corporations is cause for concern.

The top 200 firms' sales add up to more than a quarter of the world's economic activity. Do they provide more than a quarter of the world's jobs? Our research indicates that their combined global employment is only 18.8 million, which is less than three-quarters of 1 per cent of the world's workforce.

In these times of automation and downsizing, large corporations raise profits by slashing workers, not adding to them. General Motors, the corporate world's largest employer, once employed more than a million workers and helped bring hundreds of thousands of blacks into the workforce. Today its payroll has shrunk to just over 700,000 workers.

What about the claim that global firms bring lower-cost goods to consumers? Because of the top firms'

dominance, one-third of world trade is made up of transactions among various units of the same corporation. In other words, a growing share of world trade consists of a General Motors plant in Detroit shipping parts to a GM plant in Mexico.

Economic concentration in many sectors also discourages lower prices. In autos, the top five firms account for almost 60 per cent of global sales. In electronics, the top five firms have more than half of global sales. The top five firms have more than 30 per cent of global sales in airlines, aerospace, steel, oil, personal computers, chemicals and the media.

In all these sectors, price are not set by competitive pressures, and the consumer seldom sees cheaper goods.

Large firms boast that they are bringing the world closer together by making their goods and services available to a global market. In fact, what these firms are creating looks more like global economic apartheid. Two-thirds of the world's bottom 20 per cent of the rich countries and the bottom 80 per cent of the poor countries can't get jobs in the global factories of these firms and cannot afford the products they sell.

The disparity in economic power between the top 200 firms and the countries and people at the bottom is staggering. If you compare the largest 200 firms' sales with the combined personal incomes of the poorest four-fifths of humanity, the corporations have almost twice as much economic clout.

The largest 200 corporations' combined sales are bigger than the combined economies of all countries minus the biggest nine. That is, they surpass the combined economies of 182 countries. Sales last year at just one firm, Wal-Mart,

exceeded the GDPs of 161 countries.

The dominance of the top 200 firms over our world economy is growing steadily. In 1982, their sales were the equivalent of 24.2 per cent of world GDP. They now equal 28.3 per cent. Corporate profits are soaring, jumping 75 per cent from 1990 to 1995. Meanwhile, workers and communities are getting a shrinking piece of the growing pie.

The issue of corporate concentration has been noticeably absent from the political discourse of this year's American presidential election campaign. When the top candidates speak on the economy, they focus on the cost of food stamp programmes, their desire to force welfare mothers into paid employment, or the supposed drag on the economy posed by undocumented immigrants.

The facts on global corporate power indicate that the real drag is coming from the top, not the bottom of the economic ladder.

Accelerated corporate concentration is fuelling rising inequalities that hurt us all by fraying the social fabric. The candidates could have reviewed U.S. government programmes that offer insurance and export assistance to firms for their overseas forays. They could explore replacing such incentives with programmes that reward firms for investing in U.S. communities and for employing more workers at home.

The root cause of much economic anxiety in America and elsewhere is the growth of unaccountable corporate power.

Sarah Anderson is a fellow and John Kavanagh is co-director of the Institute for Policy Studies. This article is reprinted from The Sun in Baltimore.

LETTERS

Water money helps

To the Editor:

I COULD not agree more with the World Bank's description of water, as mentioned in the article "The World Bank telling Jordanians — water should not be thought of as cheap resource but as a liquid gold" (Jordan Times, Oct. 26, 1996).

At the same time, I would like to point out that we should address the problem now and not delay it till it is too late.

The local press is all too excited counting all the time the number of tourists who visited Jordan. Working in the tourism sector myself, I can only point out that tourism means consumption of water and if we want to continue to be a tourism country, then we should also

address the problem of water urgently.

My humble suggestion is that, as with the departure tax from all ports of exit of Jordan (used for the improvement of such ports), the economists at the Water Authority should come out with a plan to collect a similar tax for water consumption.

I suggest a minimum of 1 JD dinar from every person entering or leaving Jordan. That would be fair enough and at the same time provide the Water Authority with immediate cash money to improve water-collecting systems.

N. S. Khoury,
Amman.

Help Wadi Rum!

To the Editor:

EVERY YEAR I spend at least one week-end camping in Wadi Rum. Every year the situation there is deteriorating. The Moon Valley is getting worse by the day. Action should be immediately taken or we shall lose one of the most beautiful natural landscapes in the world (maybe we should lose it because, come to think of it, if we continue acting towards it the way we do now, then we really do not deserve to have it).

The reasons behind the deteriorating situation in Wadi Rum are numerous, but I shall try to summarise them in a few points (taking into account that every weekend there are at least 500 people camping at Wadi Rum):

1. Out of four million people holding Jordanian passports, and out of several experienced non-governmental organisations, such as the RSCN, only one person is licensed to cater for campers and visitors in Wadi Rum. This person does not know much about nature, is let alone conserving it. Besides the very high cost for camping, often loud, funky music could be heard from amplifiers in the middle of the night.

2. Litter is everywhere and it is increasing by the year. Soft drink cans, plastic bags, car tyres, glass bottles, food scraps and even shoes and bits of clothes are covering the beautiful pink-rose sands of Rum.

3. Car tracks are not respected. Anyone and everyone with a four-wheel car can race the wind in the Wadi and create his/her own track without any thought for the delicate flora and fauna of the site.

4. I do not want to talk of the local guides over there as this is an issue by itself, but "thieves" is all I can say about them. There are stories about what they do to fill pages, but in simple words I ashamed, as a Jordanian, of their attitude towards tourists, whether Jordanians or foreigners.

Action should be taken quickly, before the situation gets out of control.

An NGO with experience (like the RSCN whose experience at Dana Nature Reserve proved to be a most successful endeavour) should take over and organise the tracks, the number of visitors per day, methods of disposing of the litter, the prices of the tours in the 4-wheel cars, camping locations and much more.

I really wish that someone with authority in the government will expand the horizons about ecotourism and respect of nature, that he/she might go there as an ordinary visitor and see things for what they really are.

I am sad to see this exotic place fading away. What makes it worse are the rumours about plans being put forward to turn this piece of heavenly desert into a Jordanian "Las Vegas" with hotels and restaurants and other places of leisure. I believe Wadi Rum needs help.

Luna Ja'far Khirfan,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Society on the Move

Few but significant, events take to land, sea and sky

Royal Jordanian (RJ) President Nader Dahabi left for Geneva yesterday where he will assume the presidency of perhaps the world's most influential association — the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the world trade organisation of scheduled airlines. The association's more than 200 members carry more than 95 per cent of the world's scheduled international air traffic under the flags of over 120 independent nations. Since its inception in 1945, IATA's aim has been "to ensure that worldwide airline traffic moves with the greatest possible speed, safety, security, convenience and efficiency for passengers and cargo shippers, and with the utmost economy for the airlines." The association has two main offices, one in Montreal and the other in Geneva. Regional offices are maintained in Bangkok, Buenos Aires, Dakar, London, Nairobi, Rio de Janeiro, Singapore, Washington, D.C. and Amman. Mr. Dahabi's nomination to head IATA for the one-year term takes on even greater significance not only for Royal Jordanian and Jordan, but for the Arab World, as next year Amman will be the first Arab capital to host an IATA General Assembly meeting. Perhaps a birds-eye view from the



top of IATA will provide new insights into how to speed up the conversion of the cash strapped national air carrier into a commercial enterprise. Mr. Dahabi, a retired Major General of the Royal Jordanian Air Force, is accompanied to the Annual General Meeting in Geneva by RJ VP Commercial Department Majdi Sabri, AVP IATA and Industry Affairs Department Mamdouh Qulabi and head of Public Relations Munib Toukan.

GREEK WEEKS: Sailing along, the visit of an Athenian commercial delegation is being followed, coincidentally, by the arrival in Amman of Greek Minister of Mercantile Marine Stavros Soumakis on Sunday. The purpose of this, Mr. Soumakis' first visit to the Kingdom, is to sign a standard mercantile marine agreement with his counterpart, Minister of Transport Nasser Lawzi. Mr. Soumakis was one of the "hand-picked" members of Prime Minister Costas Simitis' cabinet formed in late September after the Panhellenic Socialist Party's (PASOK) victory. Arriving with his wife and a commander, whose post is equivalent to Jordan's director of the Ports Corporation, Mr. Soumakis will be hosted first by Mr. Lawzi at a small dinner on Sunday evening. On Monday morning he is scheduled to meet with Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, then move on to the agreement signing ceremony, and afterwards off to lunch where Mr. Soumakis will meet nearly all those persons involved in the maritime sector in Jordan. That evening Greek Ambassador Aristidis Sandis and his wife Georgia will host a reception for the minister, senior Jordanian officials and the press. Tuesday's schedule includes business and pleasure, with visits to Madaba, Petra,

Taybet Zamman, Wadi Mousa and finally Aqaba, where the delegation will be guests of honour at an official dinner. The next morning Mr. Soumakis will meet with Ports Corporation Director Mohammad Dalabeeh, who will deliver a presentation on the port of Aqaba and then take the Greek team on a tour of the port and a sail through Jordan's territorial waters. The minister heads back to Athens. Late this summer a Ministry of Transport team visited Athens to prepare documents for the upcoming signing of the maritime agreement. It was decided then that the signing would be held in Amman at the ministerial level.

A MAN OF PROPERTY: On land, its Ibrahim Mismar who made the news this week when the Cabinet approved his promotion to Director General of the Land and Survey Department. Mr. Mismar has been with this agency for some 30 years, and was last deputy to his predecessor Ali Gharabeh. Sources say, Abu Amjad, as Mr. Mismar is known, knows every department under his domain inside out. When we tried to catch up with him however, throngs of well-wishers had overtaken his territory at the office, and we were unable to obtain more details about him. Mr. Gharabeh, meanwhile, may well follow the path of his other retired civil servant colleagues and move to the private sector.

OFF-CAMPUS LEARNING: Already in Jordan for a short but activity-filled eight days are 23 students and

two professors from the Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. They arrived from the West Bank where they spent about six weeks taking a course and living with Palestinian families as part of a cross-cultural experience requirement for their graduation. While in Jordan they will visit the major archaeological and historic sites and attend presentations by education expert Victor Billeh, and Director of the Queen Aliu Fund for Social Development Awad Bashir. They will also visit the Palestinian refugee camp in Husn near Irbid, a trip organised through the Department of Palestinian Affairs. In the south of the Kingdom, the students will tour Wadi Disi where projects conducted by the Amman office of the Mennonite Central Committee have been under way. The committee, administered for the last four years by Paul and Rebecca Perceveroff, is a volunteer Christian organisation which began its mission in Jericho in 1950 administering relief to Palestinian refugees. After the 1967 Arab-Israeli war the programme was divided between two bases, one in East Jerusalem and one in Amman, serving Palestinians and Jordanians. The work of the committee expanded into the area of development, and today much of its efforts are spent in water conservation projects and agricultural development, helping bedouin families in the north and south in cultivating olive groves. The visiting students will continue their course with a two-week stay in Egypt. Classmates of theirs are also sampling other cultures in Europe and South America. Upon their return to their campus they will no doubt be comparing cultural notes.

Jennifer Hamarnesh

Too many cooks?

The Middle East and the United States: A historical and political reassessment
Edited by David W. Lesch
Westview Press, 1996, \$25

EDITOR: DAVID Lesch has put together a group of 25 experts, including himself, to make a "historical and political reassessment" of the Middle East. With that many people involved, Lesch's book suffers the predictable problem of quality control. Some of the articles are excellent, some less so.

On the positive side, no one has delineated the

Muslim world's complaints about the West more brilliantly than history Professor Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, in her contribution *Islamist Perceptions of U.S. Policy in The Middle East*. She calls on an array of Islamic thinkers to depict a devastating analysis of Western policies in the Middle East as "hypocritical, duplicitous and racist." Her essay pieces include Paul W.T. Kingston's intriguing look at the nearly completely forgotten peace mission of Edwin Locke Jr. in 1951, and E. Gregory Gause III's examination of the relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia. On the other hand, several articles are thin and filled with the same old clichés of the "pre-

reassessment" period.

For those mainly concerned about the Arab-Israeli conflict, Lesch's decision to devote nearly a third of the essays to Iran and the Gulf War seems more of a distraction than an asset. But, in fact, these articles are generally well done and worthy of inclusion. However, for a book purporting to reassess the history of the region, it seems an omission not to have included an essay on Black September in Jordan, much less to have not even one mention of that seminal event.

The 1970 clash with the Palestinians in Jordan with

BOOK REVIEW

full U.S. backing marked the real emergence of the United States under the guidance of Henry Kissinger as Israel's full ally and provider. It deserves more attention than it has received in understanding the trajectory of U.S. policy over the past half-century. Inclusion of such less examined events and more recent descriptions of how enormously intertwined the U.S.-Israeli relationship has become would have given Lesch's book more of a rightful claim to being a reassessment than it can make in its present configuration — Middle East International.

Donald Neff

The Irish in Jordan

By Frank Byrne
Special to the Jordan Times

THREE WEEKS ago I arrived in Jordan with a quest, to seek out Irish people who have been resident here for five years or more, as part of a series of articles I am doing on Irish men and women living in the Arab World. So far my finds have been historic.

My first port of call was to the Irish Consulate where I met Salim Saad (Honorary Consul of Ireland). He told me of Fr. Eugene Hoade, the first person to compile a definitive guide to Jordan in English in 1954. Fr. Hoade spent most of his life in Jordan and was the son of small farmers living outside Headford in County Galway.

The guide is pocket size and where most guides nowadays concentrate on getting the best value for your dollar, this one is for the traveller whose interest is historical and sociological. It contains excellent references and the style is entertaining.

Fr. Hoade died in 1972 but his guide has been revised and reprinted by The Franciscan Printing Press.

The fascinating Dead Sea rates high on every tourist's list and I decided to approach it from an Irish angle. From that castle in the sky that is Karak I took a minibus to a village near the Lisan peninsula. The midday heat that silences animal, man and bird at this low altitude was whipped to frenzy by a south-westerly swarm of flies straight from the oven of hell. "Mad dogs and Irishmen go out in the midday sun" I thought as the flies swarmed.

My destination was a point on the peninsula called Costigan — named after the first person to successfully navigate Lake Tiberias, the Jordan River and the Dead Sea in 1835. This Irishman succeeded in getting a boat carried from the Mediterranean to Lake Tiberias and with his Maltese servant he succeeded in reaching the southern extremity. After eight days they returned exhausted and

without water to the northern shore. The servant crawled to Jericho for help. They carried Costigan to Jerusalem by horse, but he died two days later. He was buried on Sept. 7, 1835 on Mount Zion.

Now, not many people know that Lawrence of Arabia has Irish roots — well, Anglo-Irish roots. Indeed his family lived in my own county, Westmeath, near the small town of Delvin. I believe that Lawrence spent some of his childhood there before being sent to an English public school.

And so it was that I left Amman on a beautiful Jordanian afternoon for the Castle of Azraq. Our taxi driver was not informative that day and when I asked about Lawrence he laughed. "Lawrence was a member of M15 and my father in Palestine could tell you many things but we haven't time now."

The Irish actor Peter O'Toole made his celluloid contribution to Wadi Rum where with the Bedouin

Tafas he made his way to Feisal's encampment. Wadi Rum is one of the great spiritual sites of the world. In the evening, four of us walked a mile or so to see the sunset near the Lawrence Spring. When we reached the point, we each separated and found our own isolated spot to contemplate this magnificence. The silence was truly deafening. Then along came a convoy of seven jeeps of Israeli tourists complete with bodyguards. They stayed at the spot for seven or ten minutes then drove off into the desert at high speed. After Wadi Rum I realised that I had experienced something, just a smidgen, of what it is to be a bedouin.

Out of history and into the present my quest for the Irish in Jordan continues. There are some similarities in our histories and our experiences but our religions and our cultures are so different. What are the difficulties, the joys and the benefits of living in another culture?

Secret of Fatima no cause for alarm — cardinal

FATIMA, Portugal (R) — The third secret of Fatima, supposedly entrusted by the Virgin Mary to three Portuguese children in 1917 and said by some to predict the end of the world, contains nothing alarming, a top Vatican official said.

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, number three in the Vatican hierarchy and privy to the secret, told a news conference that the virgin did "not want to cause fear."

He was speaking after attending ceremonies marking the 79th anniversary of the last of the apparitions in which the Roman Catholic Church believes the Virgin Mary was seen by the three children between May 13 and Oct. 13, 1917.

"The secret, in fact, has nothing to do with the history of the world, informing about something that could one day happen to us," said Card. Ratzinger, who heads the Vatican's congregation for the doctrine of the faith.

"It is not a teaching about the future but a help and an education in faith," he said.

According to the writings of the only surviving visionary, Sister Lucia De Jesus Dos Santos, an 89-year-old nun, the Virgin Mary predicted the end of World War I and the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe.

The third message was never made known, although the Vatican was told of it in 1957.

In 1960, the then Pontiff said he would put an end to the mystery but he never did.

Card. Ratzinger said that he did not know what had caused the then Pope to change his mind, nor would he be drawn on whether the current Pontiff would eventually disclose the secret.

"It depends... on the Pope and political and historical events," Card. Ratzinger said.

Pope John Paul, known for his devotion to the Virgin Mary, visited the Fatima Shrine, 130 kilometres north of Lisbon, in 1991 to give thanks to the Virgin of Fatima for the dramatic changes in Eastern Europe and for his having survived an assassination attempt in 1981.



A pilgrim arrives at the Fatima Shrine to make vows to the Virgin Mary while walking on her knees (Reuter photo)

The Pope was shot and wounded by Turkish gunman Ali Agca in Rome on May 13, 1981. He attributes his survival to divine intervention by the Virgin of Fatima, on whose feast day the attack occurred.

Separating fact from myth

Image and Reality of the Israel-Palestine Conflict
By Norman G. Finkelstein
London and New York: Verso, 1995, 243 pages

THE SON of Warsaw Ghetto and concentration camp survivors, Norman G. Finkelstein teaches international relations and political theory at City University and New York University. His book is a meticulously documented critique of Zionism in theory and practice, aiming to demolish the myths which have swayed U.S. public opinion in Israeli favour for almost half a century. His method is to scrutinise a series of works which have been influential in propagating these myths, from Abba Eban's various books to Joan Peter's *From Time Immemorial* (1984).

Finkelstein's initial chapter is a succinct review of the positions of different Zionist trends. He concludes that there was no real difference on the most significant issue, i.e., creating a Jewish majority in Palestine, which meant dispossession and expulsion of the majority of the native Palestinians. "Even the extreme left of the Zionist labour movement agreed that there was nothing morally objectionable in the notion of a compulsory population transfer" (p. 16).

Reading the book today, one is struck by the similarity

between "the iron wall" advocated by Jabotinsky in the 30s to protect the settlements, and the security fences and separate roads for settlers begun by the Labour government and now being expanded by the Likud leadership.

Many have critiqued Zionism and its traditional advocates. But Finkelstein also takes on the new breed of Israeli historians, such as Benny Morris, who utilised the Israeli army's declassification of documents in the mid-80s to write *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947-1949*.

Finkelstein credits Morris with having "produced landmark studies. (Morris) has permanently redefined the parameters of legitimate scholarly debate on the origins of the Palestinian refugee problem, dispatching to oblivion (some of) the standard Israeli claims" (pp. 86-87). But Finkelstein disputes Morris' conclusion that the refugee problem "was born of war, not by design," noting that "Morris' own evidence points to the conclusion that Palestine's Arabs were expelled systematically and with premeditation" (pp. 52-53).

Image and Reality dismisses as propaganda Abba Eban's attempts to show that Israel was not the aggressor in 1967. Concerning the prelude to the 1973 war, Finkelstein writes: "My thesis is that the above image (created by pro-Israeli

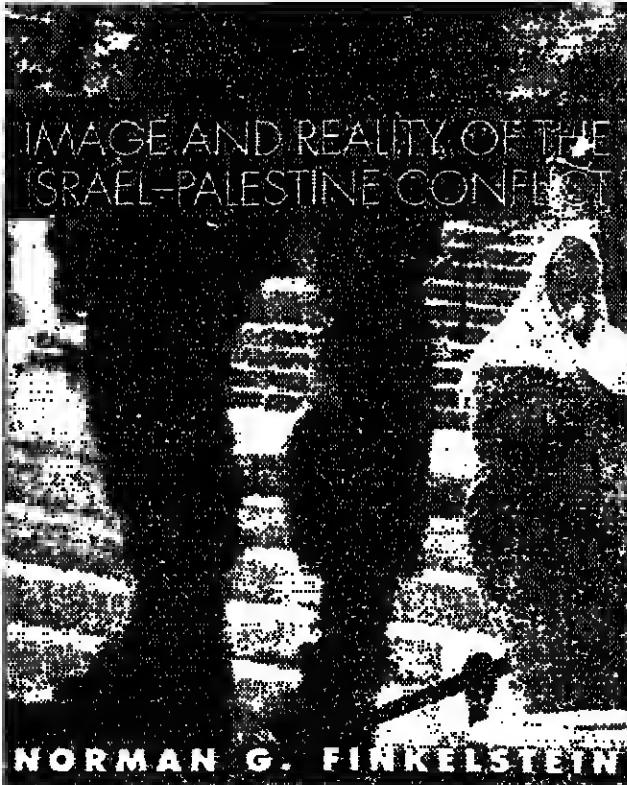
propagandists) exactly reverses the reality: Egypt (and Jordan) desperately sought a negotiated settlement after the 1967 war. Israel, however, refused to budge from the conquered territories in exchange for peace" (p. 151).

Finkelstein also devotes considerable attention to the parallels between "the apparently disparate instances of the English conquest of North America, the Dutch conquest of South Africa, the Nazi conquest of Eastern Europe, and the Zionist conquest of Palestine" (p. 89).

Though the time span of Image and Reality is past history, ending with the 1973 October War, its focus is timely and filled with parallels to today's events. For example, dealing with the aftermath of Israel's 1956 invasion when it occupied Sinai and Sharm Al Sheikh, Finkelstein includes a quote from then U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Adamant that Israel withdraw unconditionally from these areas, Eisenhower asked rhetorically if "a nation which attacks and occupies a foreign territory in the face of United Nations disapproval should be allowed to impose conditions on its withdrawal?" (p. 137). This question seems equally pertinent today if we view the problems blocking the current PLO-Israeli peace process.

Sally Bland

BOOK REVIEW



For your eyes only

By Jean-Claude Elias

CHOOSING A personal computer (PC) is not what it used to be. In the eighties, shopping for a personal computer was relatively simple. Particularly if one wanted a brand name. Buying an IBM, an Olivetti, a Wang, a DEC, a Rando or a Texas Instruments was a safe choice. All you had to do was to pick up a model and you had a complete machine with its main unit, monitor, keyboard and mouse, with overall satisfactory characteristics.

The development that has taken place in the last few years and the level of sophistication the equipment has reached make it now essential for the user to select himself the different units that make a modern, powerful PC. Very few brands propose well configured machines, with the items that would be most appropriate for a given user. These days you make your computer just like you make your menu selection at the restaurant.

While each element in a small computer certainly has its importance, the monitor (the screen) has maybe become the most critical piece to study and buy. Several factors contribute to make a good monitor a vital element in a PC, be it at home or in the office.

The question is how to choose the ideal monitor when there are so many models available and when prices vary from a modest JD 250 to an incredible JD 1600?

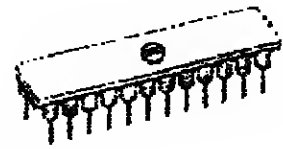
Several factors have contributed to make the screen a fundamental device in a computer setup. The almost total adoption of Window-based and therefore graphic software (as opposed to text-only software), the ever increasing number of hours we spend looking at the screen, the widespread use of video images and still photographs on CD-ROM, inexpensive colour printers, Desk Top Publishing, and last but not least, the demanding Computer Aided Design (CAD) programmes — so many reasons that make us need better monitors.

First there's the size. Currently the industry proposes the standard 14", the just-a-little-bigger 15", the magnificent 17" and the huge 20" and 21" models. Like for TV sets, the numbers refer to the diagonal dimension of the picture tube. There seems to be a "natural" selection in the Jordanian market and users are going either to the practical, affordable 14" or to the luxury 17" type. People seem less attracted by the 15" which doesn't provide any significant increase in viewing area, whereas the 20" and 21" are much too expensive for the masses.

As it is often the case with technology, bigger does not necessarily mean better — it all depends on your needs, your desk size and the type of application you mainly use. However in most cases, 17" monitors feature better specifications than smaller units.

Virtually all screens produced after 1995 are manufactured with the "low emission" — low radiation standard, also called MPRII. This has become a must. Spending several hours a day staring at a PC's monitor is not the healthiest exercise for your vision. The MPRII standard does a good job at reducing the damage and ensuring a reasonably safe environment.

chip talk



More than size and certainly more than safety characteristics, the resolution and the refresh rate are the most significant indicators of a monitor's quality. The resolution is the number of horizontal and vertical dots (or pixels — picture elements) that form the image on the tube — the higher the resolution and the sharper the image. The refresh rate is the number of times the said image is "redrawn" on the surface of tube — the higher this number and the steadier the image will look. A steady, stable image is not only more pleasant to look at but it is also more comfortable and safer.

Resolution is, typically 640x480, 800x600, 1024x768, 1280x1024 or 1600x1200 (horizontal dots x vertical dots). Unfortunately, the refresh rate is usually inversely proportional to the resolution — the higher the first is, the lower the second becomes. Users normally opt for a compromise and set their monitors at 800x600 or 1024x768. These two settings provide a sharp, quality image whether working with text or graphics. Some manufacturers try to impress buyers with high refresh rates that work only at the lowest resolutions. Check both simultaneously.

The size of each dot also contributes to the sharpness of the display. Whereas affordable commercial models have a 0.28mm dot pitch, more expensive models now feature 0.27mm, 0.26mm and even 0.25mm dot pitch.

The importance of the display controller is not to be taken lightly. This electronic card plugs inside the computer's cabinet and actually "creates" the image that is then sent to the monitor connected to it. Without digging further into technical considerations and figures, let us just say that the controller must be up to the job. It must be able to support the resolutions and refresh rates that the monitor offers. Ideally both devices, the monitor and its controller should be chosen together so that one doesn't constitute a handicap for the other. In Jordan the price of display controllers vary from JD 40 to JD 600.

An exhaustive review of monitors' and display controllers' characteristics would take five times more space than this column. The above is just intended to show the importance of a careful study of such specs before making a purchase decision, that is if one cares to have the ideal screen for a given situation and budget. Otherwise, most computer vendors in Jordan can advise you and help you get a nice monitor for you to use and enjoy. For a little less than JD 400 you can buy a better than average 14" monitor, with a matching display controller card.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuqair

AMAZING FACTS

— If you had been alive in early 18th century London you could have bought a cream that was guaranteed to cure loss of memory.

— When 500,000 acres of land was flooded in Holland during World War II it is estimated that 250,000,000,000 worms were drowned.

— The greatest attendance at any funeral is the estimated 4 million who thronged Cairo, Egypt, for the funeral of President Gamal Abdul Nasser on October 1, 1970.

— On March 2, 1978, Peter Boa of Seiberscruss, Strath Brora, Sutherland, dug out 9 sheep in snow for 33 days. Two ewes were alive.

— If an aeroplane flew over a cloud, sprayed it with salt, it would make rain.

— In 1832 Dr. Keats, headmaster of Eton, thrashed between 80 and 100 boys in one day.

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

— What are you going to do now?
Matha tanwi amalahu al-aan?

— I'm not blaming you at all.
Enni la aloomoka itlaqan.

— We are doing everything we can do.
Ennana na'mal kolla ma fee wos'ina.

— I'm not coming here anymore.
Lan ahdor hona ba'dal aan.

— You're hiding something from me.
Ennaka tokhfi shay'an an'nee.

— Have you forgotten your promise?
Hal naseet wa'daka?

— Don't you smell something burning?
Ala tashom rau' ehata shay'en yah'tariq?

— I feel a sharp pain in chest.
Ash'or be'alam shaded fee sadri.

LAUGHT-IT-OFF

— "May I have an hour off to get my hair cut, sir?"
"Certainly not. Have it cut in your own time."
"But it grows in office hours, sir."
"It doesn't do all its growing during office hours, boy."
"I'm not having it all off!"

The butcher's boy had been dismissed for insolence, and

vowed vengeance on his ex-employer. The following Saturday morning, when the shop was packed with people buying their weekend joints, he marched in, elbowed his way to the counter and slapped down one very, very dead cat.

"There you are," he called out cheerfully, "that makes up the dozen you ordered."

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. What birds are said to have saved Rome with their "warning cries"?

2. What's more familiar name for the best-known flightless apteryx?

3. Is a person in prone position one lying on his back?

4. Are bats blind?

5. Is hydrophobia another name for lockjaw?

PUZZLES

SMARGANA

The answer to each pair of clues given below are such that one is the reverse spelling of the other, example:

CLUE A: Wicked
ANSWER: EVIL

CLUE B: EVIL
ANSWER: LIVE

Now try the following:

1. A.....Indian rule.....(13).....
B.....Grate.....

2. A.....Unrefined.....(13).....
B.....Hostilities.....

3. A.....Negative.....(13).....
B.....20 cwt.....

4. A.....Fashionable.....(15).....
B.....Street-cars.....

5. A.....Bargains.....(15).....
B.....Revolver.....

Fool's gold

By Samir Ghaleb Bagaeen

IT IS funny how we are led to believe that everything around us is running like clockwork and is exactly as it ought to be at a time when everything people do and say reeks of abuse, misuse and corruption.

What follows is a series of items which appeared in our newspapers over the past seven days. They serve to illustrate what is exactly meant by abuse, misuse and corruption.

News item one
"A distinguished personality — as those currently holding public office are normally referred to — has bought a house in the United Kingdom paying over £8 million for it just because it used to belong to a pop music celebrity.

One further fact that has to be mentioned is that this personality holds a public post whose occupier ought to possess two qualities rather rare in a person towards the end of the 20th century: Loyalty and trustworthiness."

News item two
"A fight broke out outside the Faculty of Arts at one of our public universities among students from the Department of Political Science. The fight, involving batons, broke out when one student from one town was running for a seat in the students council beat another candidate from another nearby northern town.

Things got out of control when supporters of the winning candidate verbally abused and insulted the loser. This whole disgraceful affair is currently under investigation by the Dean of Student Affairs at the university."

News item three
"One illegal chicken farm west of Amman is still operational several weeks after it had been served with a clearing order by the Municipality of Greater Amman.

Similar cases abound where houses that were issued with similar eviction notices have had such notices swept under the rug and tonnes of paperwork at the offices of the municipality."

News item four
"A group of students who have sat for an entrance exam at a certain college have complained of irregularities in the clearing process."

On Record



These same students have revealed that even though they had scored the highest grades when the preliminary lists came out, they were surprised to learn that their names never made it in the official list of those accepted.

What further complicated matters was the inclusion in this latter list of names of two people who had not sat for the exam in the first place."

News item five
"While it is usual that students of the first grade at school take with them their books and sandwiches to school, it seems that in the age of laptops and mobile communications even these old customs are about to change, especially for those well endowed.

In one of our private schools, a first grader took with him to school mummy's mobile phone because he liked to carry it around with him to show it to his friends.

The headmistress who phoned the boy's mother found her to be quite indifferent in the whole affair."

News item six
"A high school for girls in the South remains, for the fourth consecutive week, without a headmistress nor a deputy headmistress.

It was reported that this is due to the fact that the headmistress is currently studying for her Ph.D. at the University of Jordan taking sick leave on a permanent basis supported by an influential acquaintance.

The deputy headmistress is also on maternity leave meaning that no one is left in charge at the school."

All this, and much more, has been, and is plaguing our society of four million. I ask that you think about these stories the next time you attempt to do the same because morality can never be spoon-fed.

JTV CHANNEL TWO WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, October 31, 1996		Monday, November 4, 1996	
2:00	Holy Koran	2:00	Holy Koran
2:05	Iris & Ovid & The Gung	2:05	Muppet Show
2:30	Take Your Pick	2:30	New Drama
2:30	Cravington Cross	2:35	Play About
3:00	Feature Film — The World's Greatest Athlete	3:00	French Programme
3:30	Starring: Tim Conway & John Amos	3:00	Nature's Inventions
5:00	News Flash	4:00	Hey Dad
5:02	Con. Feature Film	4:30	News Flash
5:30	French Programme	5:02	Destiny Ridge
	Entertainment Varieties	6:00	French Programme
7:00	Le Journal	6:00	News Headlines
7:15	Magazine — Atomes Crochus	7:35	Rosanne
7:30	News Headlines	8:01	Disaster Chronicle — Documentary
7:35	Pacific Station	8:30	Cinema, Cinema
8:01	American Chart Show	9:10	The Lazarus Man
8:30	Material World	10:00	News In English
9:10	Kung Fu	10:25	Best Seller
10:00	News In English	11:15	Bodies Of Evidence
10:25	Feature Film — In The Blink Of An Eye	12:00	Dad's Army
	Veronica Hamel + Mimi Rogers		
12:00	Taratata		
Friday, November 1, 1996		Tuesday, November 5, 1996	
2:00	Holy Koran	2:00	Holy Koran
2:05	Muppet Show	2:05	Budgie
2:30	Play About + Flintstones	2:25	Oscar's Orchestra
3:00	See How They Grow	2:40	I Love Lucy
3:15	French Programme	3:00	French Programme
4:00	Crystal Maze	3:00	Nature's Inventions
5:00	News Flash	4:00	Hey Dad
5:02	Name Your Adventure	4:30	News Flash
5:30	French Programme	5:02	Destiny Ridge
	Envoye Special	6:00	French Programme
7:00	Le Journal	6:00	News Headlines
7:15	Magazine — Allo La Terre	7:35	Rosanne
7:30	News Headlines	8:01	Disaster Chronicle — Documentary
7:35	Growing Pains	8:30	Cinema, Cinema
8:01	Secret Weapons	9:10	The Lazarus Man
8:30	Hunter (Police Drama)	10:00	News In English
9:10	Virtual Reality (Science Fiction)	10:25	Best Seller
10:00	News In English	11:15	Bodies Of Evidence
10:30	Feature Film	12:00	Dad's Army
12:00	Family Matters		
Saturday, November 2, 1996		Wednesday, November 6, 1996	
2:00	Holy Koran	2:00	Holy Koran
3:05	Adventures Of Micky And Donald	2:05	Muppet Show
3:30	(New Drama)	2:30	New Drama
4:00	Just The Job	3:00	French Programme
4:30	French Programme	3:00	Nature's Inventions
5:00	Gillette (Sports)	4:00	Hey Dad
5:30	Chris Cross	4:30	News Flash
6:00	News Flash	5:02	Destiny Ridge
6:30	Futures	6:00	French Programme
7:00	Blue Heelers	6:00	News Headlines
7:30	French Programme	7:35	Rosanne
8:01	News Headlines	8:01	Disaster Chronicle — Documentary
8:30	Something Wilder	8:30	Cinema, Cinema
9:10	Documentary — New Literacy	9:10	The Lazarus Man
10:00	Prism (Local Talk Show)	10:00	News In English
10:30	Luis And Clark	10:25	Best Seller
11:15	Final Justice (Best Seller)	11:15	Bodies Of Evidence
	Feature Film	12:00	Dad's Army
Sunday, November 3, 1996			
2:00	Holy Koran	2:00	Holy Koran
2:05	Fievel's American Tails	2:05	Budgie
2:30	You Bet Your Life	2:25	Oscar's Orchestra
3:00	French Programme	2:40	I Love Lucy
4:00	Science Magazine — Documentary	3:00	French Programme

Arts & C
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dec ago, two studies

RENDEZVOUS WITH ART

Anthology of suffering and hope

Mohammad Nasrallah's artistic expressiveness, once used to chronicle the intifada, now expanded to deal with the broader issue of Man, his woes and aspirations

By Mahmoud I. Mufti

"I WOULD get hold of any rock-chalk I could find and first scribble, then (progressively) draw trees and other things on the walls of people's dwellings in my childhood habitat, the Wihdat Refugee Camp. Fuelled by the tears of suffering and prodded by the agony of deprivation, my artistic inclination started growing and consolidating itself. I was but seven years old.

As the years went by, my continued hardships kept the wick of creativity in me alive, so that through it, I was able to develop and learn my art undoubtedly more effectively than any school could have taught me. On several occasions, I was beaten by local residents who were offended by my unsightly graffiti — as they perceived it — as well as by my abstract style, which they could not understand. I was slapped and even felt 'the blow of a stick.' (Artist, Muhammad Nasrallah, in a personal autobiography entitled 'A Single Window Unto Beauty and Freedom'.)

If love is the balm of life, and if hard work is the redeemer of Man, then art must surely be the jubilation of the soul; the pulsating dialogue between one's past experiences, present quandaries and future expectations. It is the substance-matter of dreams, the plasma of the psyche and the wick of aspirations. The dialogue emerging

from the abstract art-works of Muhammad Nasrallah — recalling figurative symbolism and poetic surrealism — bespeak a covenant between nature, Man, earth, sea, sky, good and evil. The interplay between them, and its extent, is reposed in the viewers' interpretative realms. In any event, these works, preceded by numerous others over the years, represent one man's striving to triumph over the scars of childhood hardships — not that they will ever evade his memory or, indeed, abandon his renewable present — but the triumph is there nonetheless, in the sense that, through art, he finds himself acquitted to attempt a reconciliation of all the contradictory elements in his life. The success of this particular exhibit of paintings lies in its ability to universalise these very specific and personal experiences, and endow them with a relevance that will touch the humanistic sensibilities of most people who will contemplate them.

Of instant note here, is the manner in which oil-on-paper, brush and palette knife join forces to produce arrestingly-commanding images of two inverses: serenity of the best of childhoods, and eeriness of the worst of nightmares. The starkness of contrast created here invariably invites dialogue of an intense sort. There is absolutely no chance that this aspect will go unnoticed by the visitor, all-the-more so, given that the artist's childhood was



Starling perched atop shack-by-the-sea, by Mohammad Nasrallah

anything but serene. Mr. Nasrallah discloses his deep affinity to poetry and music, citing both as instrumental to the overall mood that contributes to his artistic inspiration. When he is not listening to the pluckings of the Arabic 'Oud,' as he applies his brush, he resorts to Western classical music (of which there is particularly strong evidence in many of his works). 'Beethoven is my favourite,' he reveals.

With such disclosure, and when contemplating some of the more 'quietly serene' works — it is not at all odd to find oneself humming the opening of Ludwig Van B.'s Pastoral Symphony, Moonlight Sonata or indeed, to Vaughan Williams' 'The Lark Ascending' (preferably with Neville Marriner conducting).

Some of his other works — and even some corners and crevices of his quieter works — evoke an eeriness of the sort that can, given the right mood and moment, be felt in Igor Stravinsky's Firebird Suite, or in some compositions by Elgar, Debussy and Ravel.

The central theme of the dialogue, in most of Mr. Nasrallah's works, revolves around an impertinent-looking bird (with a seemingly impending 'sense of mission') and a wooden chair that appears to be squat in some of the renditions, elongated in others, while partially submerged in water, in others yet, in the elongated form, it rings with surrealism and looks like a chair of the sort that

might have been draped with a droopy cloak or tongue in the manner of a Salvador Dali painting. Everything about the bird — save for its presumably appalling squall — seems discernable; a keen wide eye, an impatient gait, an unsteady top-heavy disposition owed to a well-fattened upper body perched on spindly legs.

There is the sense that this bird is perpetually on-the-go, as it were, never resting, hardly tiring. When it does perch over the chair beside it, or elsewhere, it is always doing so with a sense of transience, as if just gathering itself after a long trip. Once it has hastily recapitulated its mission's goals, it will flutter away in an instant. In some depictions, it looks like a finch, while in others, like a sparrow, raven, crow or common starling.

The symbolism inherent here is one of negativism and positivism: one of an uplifting force (the bird), and a heavy, anchoring force, (the chair). The two are mutually-antithetical, yet common to both of them are the open skies, coastal waters and shorelines (rendered in a miniaturised version of Van Gogh's style of intricate 'wavy' brush strokes). In some of the paintings, rocks jut out of the sea in a pronounced way. In others, the focus is on shrubs and thickets in the foreground, which is permitted to also double up as the demarcation point between the shoreline and the sky.

Interpretative leeway is accorded to the viewer most generously in a bandful of the works, each of which depicts either a door or a window drawn in sheer air, with no structural context. One may plausibly think of them (the doors and windows) as positive, in which case they represent a pathway from the turbulence of a certain predicament to the bliss of another. Alternatively, they could allude to galactical-type black holes or vortex, silently lurking, waiting to ensnare the unsuspecting mortal and shut him/her to the abyss of oblivion.

'Internal unrest was, all the while, tormenting me inside, but simultaneously acting as the platform upon which my work has come to be based. A source of great inspiration to me has been the intifada, with the entirety of suffering and accomplishment inherent therein. My most significant work goes back to it (the intifada), and was 'about it' and 'for it' alone. But this was not an active decision I took; its sheer awe acted as the fulcrum around which the resultant creative evocations in me gravitated. Its strength and intensity of spirit 'did it' for me.'

Mr. Nasrallah feels that far from exercising its influence on the artist alone, the intifada left absolutely no-one unchanged and unaffected. In a way, it redefined people in relation to their existence and realities, consciously and subconsciously. He feels that what is currently happening in the world cannot be extricated from the present Palestinian predicament. 'In view of this, I think of the intifada as having been the crowning point in the process of the rebirth of Palestinians and the Palestinian identity. I therefore interacted with it [artistically] the way I understood it to be. It was by means of it that the Palestinians were enabled to gather their blood and history, and piece them together, jigsaw-like, with aspects of their identity in their indigenous country and on their national soil,' expounds the artist.

'At the same time, I always sit to grant the viewer the necessary artistic space and impartiality to explore 'life' in my works for himself/herself, discovering, in the process, the people bidden deep in the corners of the works; the people who inaugurated our aspirational and inspirational anthems and held their heads up high in the face of death. But all the while, whenever I painted, it was not my intention to



Intifada imagery from a 1989 exhibition, 'Chansons de la terre' (Anthems of the soil), by Mohammad Nasrallah

express the intifada directly; only its spirit. This challenge effectively spearheaded me to innovate many artistic techniques that were new to me. Consistently, however, Man and his concerns remain the paramount subjects in my work.'

The artist, it is clear, derives inspiration and motivation from specific happenings in life, but goes on to express them in his art in an abstracted manner. It is always the 'spirit' of the subject-matter that is alluded to, never its actuality or specifics. With a similar outlook does he also react to, and incorporate aspects

of literature: specifically poetry. In his current exhibit's work, he points to the significant influence of a poem entitled 'The Flyer,' by his prominent brother-poet, Ibrahim Nasrallah (who is also an avid photographer).

The younger Nasrallah, Muhammad, articulates the nature and extent of influencing-factors, like poetry, on his work: 'Just as I did not incorporate the intifada directly in my work — but only images of it — I likewise did not (in this exhibition) incorporate my brother's poem in an outright manner. Always keenly aware and insistent that the

painting has its own raison d'être and characteristics, it must, by necessity therefore, diverge from poetry. Even in the inspiration it draws from poetry, it has to be able to present a fresh meaning for the latter ... or to bring out hidden meanings ... or to construct, in the final analysis, a totally separate aesthetic entity with its very own idiosyncracies.'

The exhibition is held in the Blue House of Darat Al Funun (Tel: 643251/2), Nadim Al Mallah Street, Jabal Luweibdeh, Amman, until Nov. 11.



Antithetical forces, represented by bird and chair currently on display at Darat Al Funun

Fewer Americans smoke, but Hollywood can't kick the habit

By David E. Kalish
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The harsh yellow wall street flicks a flame to light his wife's cigarette, then plucks one from the pack for himself. He next stretches across a table and gets his father-in-law's cigar going.

The billowing smoke isn't confined to Hollywood's new romantic comedy She's The One. Such box-office stalwarts as John Travolta, Bruce Willis, and Whoopi Goldberg all puff through their recent films.

Despite legions of Americans who've kicked the habit, smoking on the silver screen has not diminished since the Surgeon General first linked cigarettes to cancer, heart disease and other ailments 3 1/2 decades ago, two studies

show.

In a society that's banned smoking from many public places, kicked the Marlboro man off roadside billboards and determined secondhand smoke is a health hazard, the celluloid behaviour can seem strikingly out of kilter. Movie-makers insist the smokes are just props, a way to define tough or rebellious characters, enhance romantic scenes or evoke earlier eras when smoking was common.

But anti-smoking advocates fume that Hollywood, willfully or not, is glamorizing cigarettes. They note that TV shows have largely given up tobacco use and suggest that more imaginative ways exist to summon nostalgia — tailfin Cadillacs and Nehi grape soda, for two examples.

Moreover, the on-

screen haze is reviving concerns the tobacco industry is paying for its products to appear in movies. Such "hidden advertising" would violate the long-standing federal requirement that tobacco ads include the Surgeon General's warning that smoking is hazardous to health.

"At the very least, (filmmakers) are being grossly irresponsible," asserted Dr. Stanton Glantz, a University of California professor of medicine who has chronicled Hollywood's habit.

Prof. Glantz, in a random sampling of scenes from 62 top-grossing films released from 1960 to 1990, found that overall tobacco use in movies remained level over three decades. And even though smoking by the lead characters dropped somewhat, it was still three times that of real

people in similar demographic groups — 65 per cent to 19 per cent, by Prof. Glantz's reckoning in 1994.

A more recent study, by the American Lung Association, looked at 133 films released in 1994 and 1995. It found that 102 of them, 77 per cent, featured characters either smoking or holding tobacco products. And compared to TV, the Lung Association said, feature films are five times more likely to depict tobacco use.

"If they simply showed tobacco use realistically, that would be a gigantic step forward from the current situation," Prof. Glantz said.

Smoke abounds in an AP sampling of nearly a dozen recent films:

— In The Bridges of Madison County, Meryl Streep, as a lonely farm wife, accepts a cigarette from Clint Eastwood,

roaming magazine photographer, in a smoldering prelude to their taboo passion. Film publicist Marco Barla says smoking was faithful to the best-selling hook and additionally helped set the scene in the 1960s.

— In Corrina, Corrina, also set in an earlier time, a cigarette dangles from Whoopi Goldberg's lips the moment she steps off the bus in her role as a sassy nanny. And she chain-smokes her way through an all-female road trip in Boys On The Side.

— Travolta, playing a Stealth bomber pilot in Broken Arrow, chain-smokes through a treacherous nuclear extortion plot. He also smokes in Pulp Fiction and Get Shorty.

— Willis is shrouded in smoke at a poker game in Nobody's Fool; a Marlboro box

lies next to his cards. Across the table, Paul Newman, playing the town troublemaker, sucks on a stylishly thin cigar.

In a telephone interview, Newman voiced concerns that movie icons might unwittingly be luring people to smoke, particularly teenagers. If old people "like me smoke, it doesn't make a difference," Newman said. "If you get John Travolta smoking, that's a different point."

The worries about under-the-table advertising hark back to 1989, when the issue flared in Congress. Memos had surfaced detailing product placement deals, in which marketers paid to have brand-name products appear in films. The deals in question included \$350,000 paid by Philip Morris to feature Lark cigarettes in

License To Kill, a James Bond movie, and \$42,500 to have Lois Lane, played by Margot Kidder, smoke Marlboros in Superman II.

The negative news stories compelled the makers of License To Kill, in production that year, to belatedly add the Surgeon General's warning to the credits.

Today, film and tobacco companies vehemently deny they are making placement deals, and the film industry insists only creative considerations now guide decisions to include cigarettes. If no money is changing hands, movie-makers contend, they're not required to run the health warning.

"Our position and our understanding is that (paid placement) hasn't been taking place for quite some time," Larry Deutchman of the Entertainment Industry

Council said in an interview. The nonprofit group works on social issues with the entertainment industry.

"Our policy is very clear: We do not engage in paid product placement," said Walker Merryman, a spokesman for the tobacco institute, a lobbying group.

Others in Hollywood go further and suggest tobacco is no longer hip. "Smoking is rather passe now," said John Parkinson, vice-president of marketing for Danjaq Inc., whose subsidiary produced Golden-eye, the latest James Bond tale, last year.

"It was one of the updatings of James Bond that we did. He still drinks, he still womanises, but he doesn't smoke anymore."

Prince Hassan: It is surely our task for the new millennium to find ways of promoting the politics of the middle ground

Following is the full text of a lecture His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al-Hassan Ben Talal delivered on Oct. 29, 1996, at the Bohemian Foundation in Prague, the Czech Republic.

This is my first visit to the Czech Republic. I sincerely hope it will be the first of many, and I would like at the outset to thank President Havel for his invitation, and Prince Schwarzenberg and the Bohemian Foundation for organising this occasion.

Like all visitors to Prague, I have been quite overwhelmed by its beauty. Anyone who has stood upon Karlov Bridge and watched the swans of the Vltava has felt a connection to the eternal. In the words of the great Czech Milan Kundera:

"The river flowed from century to century, and human affairs play themselves out on its banks. Play themselves out to be forgotten the next day, while the river flows on."

This feeling of humility before nature is familiar to Jordanians, who experience a similar sensation beneath the infinite sky of the desert. But this is by no means all that Czechs and Jordanians have in common... I would like to give you an outline of what we in Jordan seek and stand for, by exploring some of the things our two countries share.

The first important area of commonality is historical experience. From 1948 to 1989, the Czech people endured the ravages of totalitarian rule. But in a historic act of self-affirmation, at a time when history itself seemed to be speeding up, you freed yourselves from the shackles of totalitarianism and charted a new course in the world.

In the Middle East, it has been the Arab-Israeli conflict that shackled our peoples, our vision, our creative drive. My region has experienced a major war in every decade since 1948. Conflict has indeed been a kind of totalitarianism, for it filtered through in every aspect of our lives. It prevented us from developing in a normal and healthy way, stunting our growth and sapping our resources. The division of fear and mistrust it caused led both sides to develop a fortress mentality.

Arabs and Israelis alike would say that they wanted nothing more than to live in peace, but it was a curious notion of peace that excluded the other. They would aver that their only objective was security, but it was a strange concept of security that depended upon the stockpiling of ever greater arsenals of lethal weaponry.



However, at the beginning of this decade, we in the Middle East decided that we had had enough. We began to chart for ourselves a new course: a course of reconciliation.

The peace process that commenced in Madrid five years ago marked a new phase in the region's history. The Oslo accords between the Palestinians and Israelis were an enormous psychological breakthrough, because their clash of competing nationalisms over the same territory has always been the heart of the conflict. By recognising each other and each other's rights to exist, they opened the way for a radical transformation in the conduct of regional affairs.

Jordan and Israel concluded a treaty of peace in 1994. Although this was a momentous achievement, reversing the course of history in our countries, it must be seen within the overall context of the quest for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace throughout the entire region. The obstacles to peace that are experienced along the way must be seen within the same context. There have always been setbacks. But for Israel and the Arabs alike, there is no viable alternative. Peace making must go on. Peace building must be stepped up.

It could therefore be said that both the Czech Republic and Jordan have recently emerged from a long-standing condition that was often thought unchangeable, into a new era for which we have few precedents. For both of our peoples, this is a time of transition, and a sense of dislocation.

Just as many in the Czech Republic have had moments of doubt about their new course, moments of frustration and impatience, so have we in the Middle East, particularly when setbacks do occur. And just as Czechs have on occasion felt something akin to nostalgia for the certainties of the old days, so have we in Jordan some-

times missed the simplicity of having clearly defined enemies on whom to blame all our problems.

But in both our cases, the hesitation is momentary. For we both know deep within ourselves that the ways of the past did not work. We both realise that new ways are needed if we are to enjoy a better future. And new ways are what we are both discovering.

This leads me to the second major area of commonality between my country and yours. It lies within the sphere of what we might call our basic philosophy, or fundamental world view. This, I believe, is largely shaped by our physical circumstances.

Allow me to elaborate for a moment. Neither of our countries is large in terms of land mass or population. Neither is an economic giant, or a major military power.

And yet both Jordan and the Czech Republic are located at a highly significant crossroads. Jordan is at the heart of the Middle East, itself the meeting point of three continents. Likewise, the Czech lands are at the heart of Europe. For both of our countries, this centrality has meant a very active involvement in the unfolding of history.

Czechs have witnessed time and again the playing out of European destiny upon their soil. The legacies of Munich and Yalta loom large in your history. Wars and rivalries that were not of your making impacted directly upon your fate.

In the same way, Jordanians have been compelled by the facts of geography and geopolitics to participate in conflicts we did not cause. We have been obliged to host three major waves of refugees from war in the region—in 1948, 1967 and 1991. Our population today is thus double what it would have been without conflict. We can only speculate as to its negative effects upon our economy.

But it would seem that being a small nation in the

heart of a volatile region inclines one towards moderation and the middle ground. For both of our basic philosophies attach great importance to open dialogue, to peaceful accommodation and to the cardinal principle of tolerance. This is more than a posture or a stance; it is a habit of mind, a way of doing things. It is the essence of the Czech and Jordanian temperaments.

We in Jordan admired from a distance the non-violent revolution of Czechoslovakia against totalitarian rule; but perhaps even more, we admired the calm and dignified separation of the Czech Republic and Slovakia. For two nations so peacefully to determine their future is indeed a rarity in a post-cold war world that has at times looked like unravelling into a spiral of terror. And as the Czech people proceed along the path of democracy, they continue to set an example to us all. For you are successfully building social and political structures within which diversity can flourish. You are tackling national problems through rational compromise and conciliation. The search for moral solutions, for the middle ground or terra media, and for unity in diversity, is the fundamental frame of reference in this country.

This frame of reference is encapsulated in the writings of President Havel. I remember so well his New Year address to the nation in the heady winter of 1989-90. I can assure you that his words resonated in my country when he said:

"Masaryk based his politics on morality. Let us try, in a new time and in a new way, to restore this concept of politics... Let us teach ourselves and others that politics can be not simply the art of the possible, especially if this means the art of speculation, calculation, intrigue, secret deals and pragmatic manoeuvring, but that it can also be the art of the impossible, that is, the art of improving ourselves and the world."

In his dedication to human and ethical issues, in his insistence upon the non-ultimacy of economic and political factors, President Havel is indeed restoring a moral and a spiritual dimension to the conduct of international affairs. In this, he does no more than embody the deep values of the nation he represents.

I would like to think that Jordan has contributed to the same process, has stood for the same values. Diversity is a fact of our lives. Nevertheless, a spirit of peaceful co-existence and tolerance has always characterised our country, accounting in large part for

our long record of stability. Through all the turmoil of the twentieth century, Jordan has never succumbed to radical politics. It has chart-

"But it would seem that being a small nation in the heart of a volatile region inclines one towards moderation and the middle ground. For both of our basic philosophies attach great importance to open dialogue, to peaceful accommodation and to the cardinal principle of tolerance."

ed a consistently moderate and centrist course. This is reflected in our human rights record, which is second to none in the region, and it has been enhanced by our democratisation process. Operating under constitutional guarantees of pluralism, Jordanian political trends are fully represented by parties which operate without government interference, and take part in regular free elections. The process has been facilitated by the existence of a vibrant civil society, both in terms of traditional formations such as the tribe, and in terms of more modern formations such as community development groups, charitable organisations and professional associations.

The basis of the Jordanian world-view is the ongoing willingness of all our citizens to engage in dialogue. This stems from our Islamic heritage, which commands dialogue, both within a community and with other different communities.

The Jordanian world-view is also underpinned by an abiding concern with the humanitarian dimension. As a country that has witnessed so much suffering at first hand, Jordan considers it a matter of the utmost importance to alleviate the suffering of others. More than a decade ago, I stood before the United Nations General Assembly and called on behalf of my country for a New International Humanitarian Order. That led to the establishment of the Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues, which I had the privilege of chairing.

But a New International Humanitarian Order has not come into being; and the reports of the Commission have largely gone unheeded. As we see the horrific consequences of humanity's struggle against itself and against nature in the Balkans, in Rwanda and elsewhere across the world, we feel more than ever that fundamental changes are needed if a global catastrophe is to be averted. We will continue to do our utmost to bring about such changes, in concert with nations such as yours which share the same fundamental values.

So I would say that while the Czech Republic and Jordan are small countries, we have earned a certain amount of moral authority through our intellectual dedication and practical contributions to the ideals of peace, tolerance and understanding. If this is indeed a function of our size and geopolitical circumstances, then I would cite with approval E.F. Schumacher's famous dictum, small is beautiful.

Small and beautiful countries such as our own are likely to have comparable aspirations and objectives for the future. I would like now to consider these, which form the third and final area of commonality between our nations and to identify on this basis some possible areas of dialogue and cooperation.

The most obvious area of overlap is economic. The Czech Republic has travelled far along the road of transformation from a command to a free market economy—not without strains, but successfully. Likewise, we in Jordan have implemented economic and regulatory reforms over the course of the decade that have earned the approval of the IMF and World Bank. The process has also caused social strains. It has required considerable sacrifices of our people, but we are persevering with it, because we are convinced that it is in the long-term good. At the same time, we are developing an industrial policy that aims to turn our country into a more economically productive member of the international community. There is no doubt that Jordan can benefit enormously from your experience in these areas, and I hope that a dialogue between our countries can be initiated on the issues involved.

There is a wider-reaching area of commonality, however, and this concerns our place on the regional and global stages. The Czech Republic is striving to be part of a pan-European order of inter-dependence and inter-connection, complete with a corporate iden-

ity, regional discourse, and mechanisms of dialogue, security and cooperation.

We in Jordan fully understand this aspiration, for we are working to establish regional structures with similar characteristics in the Middle East. Our objective is to facilitate the process of mutual understanding and tolerant co-existence, and to promote standards of peaceful international behaviours. We therefore seek not an exclusive alliance aimed at a common threat, but rather an inclusive grouping aimed at reducing tensions and creating norms of reconciliation.

We have long called for structures of security and cooperation along the lines of the CSCE, a model whose effectiveness the Czech Republic can vouch for. We want to institutionalise regional consultation on issues of mutual concern; we want to develop fora in which to address the problems of the region in a low-key, international idiom. At present, the region tends more to crisis management than dialogue. We meet when we have something to discuss. What we want is to discuss something every time we meet.

The first step in such a process would be to articulate a Code of Conduct specifying the rights and obligations entailed in being part of the region. These simple but obligatory ground rules might include respect for national borders, rejection of violence, cooperation on security and economic matters, democratisation and respect for human rights. It has been widely acknowledged, among others by Henry Kissinger, that the existence of such a code was important to the success of the Helsinki process.

Some pointers for the future can be found in the Barcelona Declaration, which has been approved throughout the region. The Declaration includes a Code of Conduct containing similar norms to those I have suggested. Indeed, it may be that in the very act of defining its relationship with Europe, the region will develop a clearer sense of its own identity. The same applies to international security organisations. With this in mind, Jordan participates in apolitical and security dialogue with NATO, has been proposed for observer status at the OSCE, and is aiming for parliamentary observer status in the NAA.

I am sure that Czech experts have put in a great deal of thinking on questions of this sort. It would be extremely fruitful for us to engage in dialogue on these issues, which will after all shape for next millennium.

In this respect, it could be said that our countries are at the forefront of the development of a new global political culture. Despite all our hopes, the post-cold war world is not yet one of mutual respect, tolerance and peace. It is surely our task for the new millennium to find ways of promoting the politics of the middle ground. If we can create a dynamic international network of countries which subscribe to these norms, we can together exert positive pressure in their favour.

We should take courage from the fact that we are not alone. The number of such countries is not small. I would like in this context to cite the words of Irish President Mary Robinson, who along President Havel is a tireless champion of these views. She said:

"I suggest that we need—and will continue to need as we move into the next century—a sense of human solidarity at the global level going beyond mere legitimacy; a concern for the weak, the excluded and the powerless commensurate with the increasing integration of our world."

Only if countries such as ours work together can we bring these values and norms to the conduct of affairs both within and between states. Only thus will we have a real chance to change the course of international politics.

Dear friends, Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus, addressing this very foundation last May, summarised the Czech perspective in the following terms:

"We are a small country, we are a Central European country, we are a post-communist country, we are a civic country, we are an individualistic country and we are a pragmatic country." While Jordan cannot claim to be Central European or post-communist, we identify strongly with the other components of the Czech vision.

It is clear, then, that Jordan and the Czech Republic already share commonalities in many areas. We are small states in volatile regions, passing through political and economic transitions. We are countries which face questions of regional inter-dependence and cooperation. We are, above all, nations which practice the politics of the middle ground.

It should now be our objective to expand these commonalities. It is time to turn from the theoretical to the practical. It is time to identify areas for fruitful dialogue and cooperation in which we can be of mutual benefit on every level. I feel confident that the task will be both pleasant and productive.

with his Czech counterpart.

The minister of culture, on whose behalf Mr. Madadha signed, was unable to come to Prague for the ceremony due to other travel plans he was making.

The accord signed is in effect implementation of an agreement signed between Jordan and the former Czechoslovakia in 1978, stipulating exchange of scholarships, youth activities and educational programmes.

Settlers

(Continued on page 7) lence. In a forest of possible trouble to come, a group of settlers assaulted senior Palestinian officials who visited the city on Tuesday, calling them murderers and terrorists and forcing soldiers to intervene.

Press reports said police had already drawn up a list of right-wing activists to be barred from Hebron prior to an eventual redeployment and some leading militants were said Wednesday to have already gone underground to escape the dragnet, including former Kach chief Baruch Marzel.

Debate on electoral law

(Continued from page 1) embryonic Jordanian democracy."

In the past weeks, observers have pointed out that, under the current regulation, Amman's six electoral districts elect 21 deputies in the 80-member Parliament, but hold 38 per cent of the country's population. On the other hand, other less populated governorates, like Karak, Madaba, Tafleeh and Ma'an, are over-represented, critics argue.

In this regard, many have called for a re-allocation of the seats according to the number of voters in each district and the density of population therein, while others have forwarded historic and social reasons to maintain the status quo, though with some "adjustment."

"I would rather raise the number of deputies from 80 to 100, and give each voter two preferences, so that he/she could use the first for the candidate of his/her tribe and the second for the candidate he/she feels more appropriate from a political point of view," Mr. Rawabdeh said, adding that minority seats provide a way to grant ethnic and religious minorities a representation.

Responding to Mr. Rawabdeh, the vice-president of the Arab Organisation for Human Rights, political scientist Labib Kamhawi, declared that "nobody can claim that the Jordanian people cannot handle democracy." He called for the implementation of the 1992 National Charter and the establishment of a commission to draft an electoral law to be submitted for national approval through a referendum.

The issue of minority seats, together with the possibility of introducing a quota for women recently floating in some political circles, dominated the debate during the afternoon session. The guest-speakers' contributions suggested that, in the presence of a proportional representation system, where the percentage of votes obtained by each party or grouping is truthfully translated in the percentage of parliamentary seats, "minorities are automatically represented without seats being reserved to them."

"Minority seats are a free ride," said democratisation and constitutional design expert Andrew Reynolds, from the Oslo-based International Institute for

Democracy and Electoral Assistance

Presenting a lecture entitled: "Choosing an Electoral System: Lessons from Southern Africa," Dr. Reynolds, who served as consultant for the United Nations and host countries on questions of electoral system design in South Africa, Malawi, Sierra Leone and Fiji, said that a proportional representation system, though presenting some disadvantages, has in itself incentives for the representation of minorities.

Political parties, for example, Dr. Reynolds said, will naturally list to win the female electorate, while women activists Amal Neffah and Zuleikha Abu Rishah complained that the current one-person, one-vote system has de facto relegated women to a secondary role on the political arena and called for a "more just and proportional system." The seminar's programme for Thursday includes a lecture by Norway's Bernt Aardal on "Representativity versus Legitimacy." Later in the morning, Director of the Centre for Strategic Studies Mustafa Hamameh, Egyptian political scientist Sa'deddin Ibrahim, together with Mr. Elkhit, Mr. Aardal and Mr. Reynolds will give their concluding remarks.

Crown Prince

(Continued from page 1)

learning, St. Charles University. He also gave interviews to the press and television, which were keen to learn from him about the latest developments in the Middle East and his involvement in efforts to fight for humanitarian causes and against all forms of discrimination and stereotyping.

During those activities, Prince Hassan stressed the need for the two stable, democratising countries to work together in the fields of conflict resolution, intercultural cooperation and economic development. His basic message was that the Czech Republic, being a leading candidate for full-fledged membership in the European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) (otherwise known as Euro-Atlanticism), and Jordan, which is moving towards partnership with the Europeans and association with NATO, can work together within the two frameworks which provide two overlap-

ing and complementary circles of cooperation. Therefore, joint efforts can and should start in the different dimensions without awaiting the final membership of the Czech Republic in the EU and NATO.

President Havel, at a press conference he held jointly with the Crown Prince on Tuesday, responded positively to these ideas. "And the two sides have already begun the search for the right tools and mechanisms with which to achieve these goals," a senior aide to the Crown Prince said. "Technical delegations have already started meetings to hammer out details."

In an interview with the Czech Martin of Tiedem magazine, Prince Hassan said that Jordan would like to see an end to the suffering of the Iraqi people and Iraq standing up "on its own feet."

The Crown Prince reiterated Jordan's consistent support for the Palestinians and their full right to set up their state on their national soil.

Prince Hassan warned that the causes of extrem-

ism could not be attributed only to extremists themselves but to the root causes that fuel extremism. These causes, he said, must be completely eliminated and that it was not true that the term "Islam" had become linked to extremism and terrorism.

He added that the Arab World was ready to resume negotiations with Israel in order to attain a just, durable and comprehensive peace. He noted that Syrian President Hafez Al Assad had said, in a recent interview with Cable News Network, that he was ready to resume negotiations with Israel.

In reply to a question on a future Jordanian-Palestinian relations, the Crown Prince said: "We should first transcend this interim, and His Majesty King Hussein's visit to Jericho is a clear sign for Jordan's support for the Palestinians and for their leadership. Confederation is linked with the will of the two peoples."

Prince Hassan called for removing the distortion that associates Islam with terrorism, violence and extremism, pointing out to

civil disputes taking place in Ireland and the dispute in Afghanistan which have ethnic dimensions and have nothing to do with religion.

He also called for involving ethics in political work and adopting a basis for action hinged on morality, and separating that from pure political action.

President Havel told the Crown Prince on Tuesday that there were qualified national companies which were willing to work in Jordan and the Middle East.

The prime minister, and Minister of Trade and Industry Vladimir Dlouhy, with whom Prince Hassan met separately yesterday, also expressed their country's interest in promoting economic trade ties with Jordan.

Currently the Kingdom's imports from the Czech republic stand at around only \$3.50 million, while Jordan exports less than a \$1.00 million worth of goods, mainly pharmaceuticals, to the Republic.

The minister of state for foreign affairs, Khaled Madadha, on Tuesday signed a cultural, educational and youth agreement

8 Economy

Arab Gulf states reap rewards of surging oil prices

ABU DHABI (AFP) — A surge in oil prices has brought Arab Gulf producers enough earnings this year to eliminate a projected deficit in their budgets and invigorate their economies, bankers have said.

The six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, which produce nearly one fifth of global crude supplies, earned an estimated \$59 billion from crude exports in the first nine months of 1996, the bankers said.

The revenues are between \$9 billion and \$15 billion higher than the level forecast by the six countries in their annual budgets.

"Gulf states generally assume an oil price of \$14-\$16 in their annual budgets but prices have averaged

around \$19 for most Gulf crudes during the first nine months of this year," a Riyadh-based banker told AFP.

"This means the combined revenues of the six members have exceeded their projections by between \$9 billion and \$15 billion. This is enough to shore up the budget deficit, which was estimated at \$9 billion."

Oil prices over the past few weeks exceeded the \$21 benchmark long sought by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

They have remained firm throughout the year because of a sharp decline in the crude stocks of industrial countries and the delay in the resumption of Iraqi supplies under an oil-for-food

agreement with the United Nations.

Up to the end of September, the price of OPEC's basket of seven crudes averaged around \$19.2 and it is expected to remain strong until the end of the year because of an increase in seasonal demand in the last quarter. The level is the highest average price in nearly 14 years.

"Some GCC members will likely earn enough to remove their budget deficit and record surpluses given their large oil exports," a Saudi banker said.

Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil supplier, produces around eight million barrels per day (bpd) of the GCC's total output of nearly 13.5 million bpd. Its crude exports are estimated at

around 6.5 million bpd.

Buoyed by the high oil price, Riyadh last month paid outstanding dues to thousands of its contractors and experts said this would support the economy.

"Payments to those contractors mean they will have more liquidity. This will definitely have a strong positive impact on business in general and consequently boost the economy," an economic expert said.

Saudi Arabia carried above its budget projections last year due to an improvement in crude prices, but the shortfall persisted as it boosted expenditure and used part of the excess income to replenish reserves severely weakened by Gulf war costs.

U.N. internal audits find overpayments, fraud

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — Internal audits by U.N. officials have uncovered overpayments to staff totalling millions of dollars and some evidence of fraud, the top U.N. administrative watchdog said Tuesday.

But in his annual report to the U.N. General Assembly, under secretary-general for Internal Oversight Services, Karl Paschke, said the United Nations had been largely successful in recovering the funds.

The report, which also detailed unnecessary purchases by procurement authorities, said that between July 1, 1995 and June 30, 1996 a total of \$12 million had been identified as potential recoveries and savings.

And of that, a total of \$9 million had been realised.

He only referred briefly to the most serious case of fraud to be uncovered this year at the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development in Geneva.

Mr. Paschke said the investigation into a senior staffer's alleged diversion of funds was continuing.

The official, an American national, is suspected of fraudulently diverting daily allowances and travelling expenses to the tune of at least \$600,000 since 1991.

Other examples mentioned in the report included a case involving some staff members in Haiti who were claiming benefits to which they were not entitled, which resulted in disciplinary action, Mr. Paschke said.

The report also detailed many cases of overpayment to staff on peacekeeping missions totalling "hundreds of thousands of dollars," although he did not suggest that the practice was fraudulent.

Staff working for the U.N. Iraq-Kuwait observer mission were currently repaying an estimated \$844,000 in overpayments made since 1993.

Rental subsidies of the

U.N. Centre for Human Settlement were criticised, with one staff member having a monthly rent allowance overpaid by \$2,500 over several years — totalling \$150,000.

In another case, "a staff member was paid rental subsidy at rates applicable to a lease agreement for a New York apartment even after taking residence on another continent."

That cost the international body \$33,000 over a three-year period.

Among other notable anomalies mentioned in the report:

— Fifteen guards were hired for the detention facilities of the international tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in the Hague — more than six months before the first detainee arrived and before the building was ready.

— 59 containers of expired food rations, found to be fit for consumption in 1994, were stored in the blazing sun

in Kigali as a protective barrier around the offices of the U.N. special representative for Rwanda.

The United Nations had to spend \$40,000 to have the food destroyed.

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Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLS	FRF
US Dollar	1.0000	1.5085	0.6126	1.2512	113.66	1.3410	1513.30	1.8926	5.0967
DE Mark	0.6625	1.0000	0.4935	0.8291	75.46	0.8878	1002.45	1.1218	3.3758
GB Sterling	1.6316	2.0463	1.0000	1.6607	165.60	2.1862	2489.40	2.7623	6.3168
CHF Franc	0.7892	1.2643	0.4886	1.0000	91.02	1.0896	1206.51	1.3522	4.0658
JP Yen	0.0088	1.3239	0.5371	1.0884	1.0000	1.1760	13.30	148.50	4.4894
CA Dollar	0.7457	1.1404	0.4659	0.9396	1.16	1.0000	1137.58	1.2784	3.6550
IT Lira	0.0007	0.9947	0.4036	0.8825	1332.62	0.6636	1.0000	11.16	3.3583
NL Guilder	0.5907	89.10	0.3816	73.97	67.25	0.7917	895.02	1.0000	3.0087
FR Franc	0.1982	0.2961	0.1201	24.5651	22.33	0.2630	33.21	33.2100	1.0000

Energy				
Oil	Last	Previous	Oil	Last
Brent	23.70	23.95	Oil	Last
W. Texas	24.05	24.10	W. Texas	24.05
Bony	23.70	23.95	Bony	23.70
Dubai	21.37	21.75	Dubai	21.37
UL Gas	225.00	223.00	UL Gas	225.00

Mid-East Currencies				
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4027	0.18341	0.33595
AE Dirham	0.2724	0.41144	0.16694	0.34118
KW Dinar	3.3400	5.04541	2.04666	4.18235
BH Dinar	0.3770	0.40641	1.82549	3.32226
CY Pound	2.1666	3.2733	1.3279	2.7157

Metal Prices				
Metal	Bid	Offer	Metal	Bid
Gold (oz)	379.9	380.4	Gold (oz)	379.9
Silver (oz)	4.83	4.85	Silver (oz)	4.83
Platinum (oz)	380.5	381.5	Platinum (oz)	380.5
AL (3 Months)	1428	1429	AL (3 Months)	1428
CU (3 Months)	1949	1950	CU (3 Months)	1949
Zinc (3 Months)	1051	1052	Zinc (3 Months)	1051
Lead (3 Months)	747	748	Lead (3 Months)	747
Ni (3 Months)	7330	7340	Ni (3 Months)	7330

Energy				
Commodity	Last	Delivery	Commodity	Last
Coffee (c/lb)	122.5	Spot	Coffee (c/lb)	122.5
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1429	Spot	Cocoa (\$/ton)	1429
Sugar (\$/ton)	322.6	Spot	Sugar (\$/ton)	322.6
Wheat (\$/ton)	160	Spot	Wheat (\$/ton)	160
Soya (c/lb)	21.9	Spot	Soya (c/lb)	21.9
Tea (kg/kg)	117	Spot	Tea (kg/kg)	117
Barley (\$/bsh)	2.19	Spot	Barley (\$/bsh)	2.19
Rice (\$/bsh)	470	Spot	Rice (\$/bsh)	470

JOD Cross Rates				
Currency	Buy	Sell	Currency	Buy
US Dollar	0.708	0.710	US Dollar	0.708
GB Sterling	1.1395	1.1452	GB Sterling	1.1395
DE Mark	0.469	0.4713	DE Mark	0.469
CHF Franc	0.5647	0.5675	CHF Franc	0.5647
FR Franc	0.1385	0.1392	FR Franc	0.1385
JP Yen	0.8197	0.8226	JP Yen	0.8197
NL Guilder	0.4181	0.4202	NL Guilder	0.4181
IT Lira	0.4852	0.4875	IT Lira	0.4852

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1996

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Study better methods for handling your routine career activities today and employ them for excellent results. Be more cooperative with your loved ones later this evening so that there will not be any difficulties.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Try to perfect some talent you possess today and then it will perform just fine and become profitable to you. This evening you will be able to complete some important assignment which has been given to you by a bigwig.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) The situation at home could be perplexing today, so listen to what loved ones are saying and be cooperative with the aid of a fellow associate. Later tonight, you will find a romantic location for you and your mate to be alone.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You may have a slow start in completing an important assignment given to you by some bigwig this morning however, persevere. Your career activities can work out well later in the day if you keep motivated.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You need more monetary security at this time, so listen to what a clever fellow associate has to suggest in you and follow the advice which is given. Later this evening will be good for going to some special place with loved ones.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Know what your fellow associate wants of you today. Later this evening be more home-oriented and entertain guests who will have some fun with those who are important in your life and whom you wish to see more of.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Some concern may have you confused in the morning today, however, do not let any difficulty be pressing on your mind. Forget about any difficulties which you may have for the moment and go out shopping and visiting.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) If you change your attitude towards a good friend, today you could regret it later in the days ahead. Get busy at building up your income in this time in the eventually you are not able to keep up with expenses.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Taking any risks with those who have the power over your affairs would be unwise at this time. Maintain poise in dealing with any adverse situation which comes in your direction later tonight.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) This is not the right time today to make any changes you have in mind concerning your career activities, however, it is fine for having a good time with close friends and your loved ones in some fun recreations.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Responsibilities of a practical nature have something puzzling about them today, so set them aside for a while and all events later this evening will develop into some wonderful opportunities for the days ahead.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Discuss matters of a career oriented nature today with fellow associates until you have achieved a harmonious agreement without ill will. Later tonight, will be the time to complete any critical project which has been put off.

Birthstone of November: Topaz — Tiger's Eye.

THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS

- Sharp turn
- Oriental maid
- Stag
- "Much — About Nothing"
- Authentic
- Province
- stop
- acid (bleaching agent)
- "The King and I" setting
- Something to read in a snowstorm?
- de mer
- Condition
- The Moor of Vanice
- Compass dir.
- Eureka!
- Cordelia's father
- Collected sayings
- Revere
- Gives a Mickey
- Work unit
- Crime organization
- Estuaries
- Flower
- Little girl
- Feminine ending
- In the manner of
- The Thane of Glamis
- FL city
- Wrestling venue
- Baseball taro?
- Marsh bird
- Parhelion
- Long time
- Preminger
- Symphonic movement
- Foxy
- Question word
- Russian news agency
- Driving aid?

DOWN

- Intricate
- Mine entrance
- Garmanic invader
- Declaration
- Jawbone
- Author Palon
- Handles
- Waste maker
- Domingo
- showcase
- Genuine
- Domesticated
- Food choices
- Loud noise
- Stand out
- Vapor
- Song of yore
- Sea birds
- Tugs
- "A Chorus Line" number
- Michael Caine film
- Crane
- Flooded
- Curve
- "As a — the slaughter" (Biblical)
- Dignified
- Whale group
- Knocks dead
- Pledge
- Tac
- Milay or Ferber
- What's left
- Flatish
- American humoust

by Jay Sullivan

PAISICAL SIAHIL NOV
ASPIALE OMOO ARI
CHARLES LAMB BOX
EIM EU LIAINA AONE
EOWAROGIBION
CAMINERY AION
RUE DIES NEWIER
ETAIL TRASH RAILE
ROTOR OPIAL DIA
ROMA TINT TAIL
FRANC ISIDRAKE
LAVA SIAIRA EELIS
ADIO ZIEAULONPIKE
MODI EREI DIEPIIN
END EYEIO ADESITE

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- 46 Keeps a tight rein on things
- 50 Love affair
- 52 Ships' loads; var.
- 53 Viny fruit
- 54 Otherwise
- 56 Something unpleasant to eat

Peanuts

OH, NO! OUR LAST GAME OF THE SEASON AND IT'S A FLY BALL TO LUCY!

IF SHE CATCHES IT, WE WIN! IF SHE DROPS IT, WE LOSE!

AAUGH!

SORRY, MANAGER, THE SEASON GOT IN MY EYES...

Andy Capp

I'M NOT TAKING MUCH MORE OF THIS SILENT TREATMENT!

IT'S HAPPENING ALL TOO OFTEN—SOON IT'LL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO LIVE WITH YOU!

TALK TO ME!

HOW SOON?

Mutt'n'Jeff

WELL, YOU'RE RIGHT, BUT I'M NOT GOING TO GO TO IT TUM

OH, NO! AMAM WA-LI-TO GO TO IT TUM

SURE!

WHAAM! A TALK WITH YOU! I'M GOING TO GO TO IT TUM

THE BETTER HALF

"We've saved enough little retirement home. Do you prefer a can"

JUMBLE

VOAB

CALLI

TENOPT

UNDOAR

Print answer here: A

Birthstone of October: Opal — Thaurmafee.

Agassi crashes out of Paris Open, vows to be back at top

PARIS (AFP) — Andre Agassi crashed to a humiliating defeat in his first match at the Paris Indoor Open in the early hours of Wednesday morning — but definitely vowed that he would climb back to the top.

The 26-year-old Olympic champion stumbled to a shock 6-4, 3-6, 6-3 defeat against stubborn Swede Magnus Gustafsson — losing five games in a row after leading 3-1 in the final set — and admitted that he had been too careless.

The loss to Gustafsson is the latest in a growing series of failures by Agassi which are beginning to eat away at his credibility.

For although he reached the semi-finals at this year's Australian and United States opens, he also crashed to a first round defeat at Wimbledon and only won one match at Roland Garros.

On Tuesday Agassi, who won the event in 1994, never looked comfortable on the Bercy showcourt — despite plenty of vocal support from hundreds of his faithful fans who sat out to the bitter end waving banners and chanting.

Bearded under a black baseball cap, the former world No. 1 wore a gharish blue, collarless shirt and black and white shoes.

He certainly didn't look a happy man when he dropped the opening set and, although he was able to break Gustafsson early in the third set, his tennis suddenly disintegrated.

The defeat is a serious blow to Agassi's hopes of qualifying for one of the three remaining berths at the elite eight-man ATP Championship finals at Hanover next month. But he declined that offer, saying he would rather wait for a better opportunity.

Asked what had gone wrong after he had taken the lead in the final set, Agassi shrugged: "I missed the line by half an inch on a return he watched go by, then I clipped the tape and a big backhand return didn't go over. You've got to get the breaks to win close matches."



Andre Agassi

Agassi, who was making only his second tournament appearance since his semi-final loss to Michael Chang at the United States open, staged his comeback to competition at Stuttgart last week but was beaten there by his old rival Pete Sampras in the quarter-final. He admitted that apart from his Olympic gold medal, 1996 had been a difficult year.

"Obviously the highlight

of the year for me was the gold medal in Atlanta. That, to me, made the whole year. It's unbelievable that something so precious was won in the midst of a year when I really struggled."

"Next year I want to play really well in the grand slams. I really want to give myself a shot of winning each one. That's the goal."

Agassi was not the only seeded casualty. Wimbledon champion Richard Krajicek and former world number one Jim Courier, two players trying to reclaim their places among the world elite after serious knee injuries, also failed at the first hurdle.

An ailing Krajicek, the seventh seed, felt sick before going on court — and even sicker when he walked off after failing to convert two match points

while crashing 6-3, 1-6, 5-7 to Spain's Alberto Berasategui.

Courier, 26 and a semi-finalist here last year, had been hoping for a good run in Paris to put an end to a disappointing string of results which started after his first-round defeat at Wimbledon.

The 1991 and 1992 French Open champion, who has now won only three matches in his last six tournaments, was beaten 6-4, 7-5 by France's stylish Davis Cup player Arnaud Boetsch.

Boetsch, recent runner-up at the ATP event in Lyon and a semi-finalist in Vienna, now plays second-seeded Michael Chang.

The Chinese-American edged into the third round after a tense two-and-a-half hour shootout against towering Australian teenager Mark Philippoussis who fired down 25 aces.

Chang eventually chalked up a 7-5, 3-6, 7-6 (9/7) victory.

In the day's other matches, 25-year-old qualifier Fernon Wibier kept the Dutch flag flying by producing one of his best-ever results by defeating 33rd-ranked first-round opponent Francisco Clavet of Spain 6-7 (3/7), 6-4, 6-3.

Wibier, currently a modest 211th in the rankings, now plays another Spaniard, 14th seeded Alberto Costa, for a place in the last sixteen.

French wild card entry Guillaume Raoux, recent doubles hero of France's Davis Cup semi-final triumph over Italy, was beaten in straight-sets by Martin Damm of the Czech Republic.

Damm, a qualifier, earned a second-round showdown with this year's 13th seeded Wimbledon runner-up Malivai Washington of the United States by chalking up a 7-6 (9/7), 6-2 victory over the bespectacled Frenchman.

Paul Haarhuis unexpectedly won the all-Dutch clash with his doubles partner Jan Siemerink — scoring a 3-6, 7-6 (8/6), 6-4 win to reach a second-round clash against sixth-seeded Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia.

Ferreira, seeded eight and who lives in Paris for much of the year, came safely through his first match against Daniel Vacek of the Czech Republic.

Ferreira now plays Agassi's conqueror — Gustafsson.

Vikings running back out for season

MINNEAPOLIS (AFP) — The Minnesota Vikings took a crushing hit on Tuesday when they learned that starting running back Robert Smith will be lost for the season after tearing ligaments in his left knee.

Smith carried four times and lost one yard in a 15-13 loss to Chicago on Monday night. He got his left leg caught under him on the sidelines as he tried to turn the corner on a sweep play, ending what had been his first injury-free season.

The 24-year-old Smith has battled injuries since being drafted in the first round of the 1993 draft. In his rookie season, he missed eight games due to chicken pox, an inner ear infection and a torn anterior cruciate ligament, but still managed to gain 399 yards.

Italian club humiliated in UEFA Cup

PARIS (AFP) — Lazio and AS Roma bowed out of the UEFA Cup Tuesday reducing Italian Serie A representation to just Inter Milan — and they only won on penalties.

Italy has provided seven of the last nine UEFA Cup winners, three of those, finals were all Italian affairs, but this season could be a repeat of last when Italy failed to provide one semi-finalist.

Roma beat Karlsruhe 2-1 in the second leg match but found the 3-0 deficit from the first leg too much of a hurdle, while Lazio lost 5-3 to Tenerife, 5-4 on aggregate.

Lazio may count themselves unlucky to have scored three away goals and lost, but they were too open at the back allowing Tenerife striker Juanele a double, the decisive goal of the game being a delightful long range effort.

The Italians, knocked out at the same stage by Lyon last season, had originally taken the lead through Czech Republic international Pavel Nedved, only for their defender Alessandro Nesta to put past his keeper Luca Marchegiani a minute later.

Bosnian striker Mehmed Kodro, signed from Barcelona in the summer, controversially made it 2-1 to Tenerife in the 26th minute.

Italian international Diego Fuser equalised four minutes later, and when fellow international Pierluigi Casiraghi equalised Juanele's first score in the 46th minute it looked as if Lazio were home and dry on the away goals rule.

However, their defence was caught napping a minute after Casiraghi's goal allowing Yugoslavian midfielder Slavisa Jokanovic to steal in and score. Juanele sealed the Italians fate a quarter of an hour later.

Lone survivors Inter Milan relied on former Italian national keeper Gianluca Pagliuca in the penalty shootout, saving Erwin Dampfhofer's spot-kick.

But manager Roy Hodgson's celebrations were marred by the extra time sending off of England midfielder Paul Ince for a second bookable offence.

Temperamental Hingis loses doubles partner

PARIS (R) — Czech Helouva, looking to avenge "nightmare" season she will drop her edon doubles-partner Martina Hingis the year-ending WTA championships in November.

The 24-year-old Swiss phenom has enjoyed huge success since turning professional a year ago, gaining a top one of the world number seven doubles player said.

Sukova said Hingis's petulance is not the only reason for their parting ways, but acknowledges it has played a role in her decision.

"She is still learning how to play tennis and how to be a professional," Sukova said, adding that she has yet to decide on a new doubles partner. "I don't know (who it will be) at the moment. I know that it must be someone experienced player because I don't want to repeat the same nightmare again."

During their six-month

The last straw for the 31-year-old Czech was when Hingis suddenly told her she would not be playing in a tournament from November 11 to 17, an event they had agreed on.

"I understand she's been through a lot but...A professional partnership should work like that. You should be more reliable and more professional," the world number seven doubles player said.

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During their six-month

partnership, Sukova and Hingis won at the European indoors as well as Wimbledon, reached the finals at Filderstadt, the semifinals of the U.S. Open, and the quarter-finals of the French Open.

Over the same span Hingis, ranked 10th in doubles and a career-high eighth in singles this week, has also tasted success by winning the singles at Filderstadt and reaching the European indoor final.

Citing the pair's successes, Sukova said she has no regrets about the time spent with Hingis.

"I can't say the cooperation was bad, but basically I had to find some new partner because the relationship wasn't as easy as I expected it to be."

"I know that her priority is singles but I thought that she would be focussed more on doubles too," Sukova said. "That's why we have to split. It's very difficult for her because she's so young."



Newcastle's David Batty (R) avoids a tackle by Andras Telek (L) of Ferencvaros in the second round, second leg tie of the UEFA Cup at St James park. Newcastle won the match 4-0, 6-3 on aggregate (Reuters photo)

his second dismissal in two weeks.

Roma's Argentine forward Alessandro D'Alagna struck twice in space of five first half minutes to give the Olympic stadium crowd hope, but efforts proved insufficient, the Germans cruised to a 4-2 win.

Frenchman Marc Keller hit the halfway goal for Karlsruhe, who qualified through the quarter-finals, on 83 mins leaving the Italians the impossible task of scoring three times before the full whistle.

It was a bad night for German clubs in general. Schalke (4) lost Karlsruhe in the next round as they shared six goals at Trabzonspor to edge the Turks 4-2 on aggregate and Hamburg edged Spartak Moscow 5-2 after a 2-2 draw in Russia.

Borussia Moenchengladbach failed to make it German clean sweep, however, despite winning 10 in Monaco. Michael Kluckert scored the only goal, but the hosts hung on having done the hard part by winning 4-2 in the away leg.

Newcastle kept British hopes alive in the UEFA Cup as they stormed into the third round with a crushing 4-0 win over Ferencvaros at St James' Park to win the tie 6-3 on aggregate.

Britain's other survivors Aberdeen failed to break

down a tough Brondby side, who were content to play out a goalless draw having already won 2-0 at Pittodrie.

Newcastle's Colombian enigma Faustino Asprilla stepped into the injured Alan Shearer's boots and promptly hammered home two goals either side of half time to put the geordies in the driving seat after Peter Beardsley had earlier struck the post from the penalty spot.

If the man of the match accolades went to Asprilla, the goal of the night was scored by mercurial Frenchman David Ginola — a sensational volley which followed a neat juggling act on the edge of the box.

Les Ferdinand collected the fourth in the dying seconds.

Elsewhere, Metz reached the last 16 for the first time in their history, wrapping up a 3-2 aggregate victory over Sporting Lisbon after going down 2-1 in the Portuguese capital.

Despite living dangerously in the last 15 minutes, during which Sporting came from 1-0 down to score twice in quick succession, Metz clung on to go through courtesy of their goal from Frederic Arpinon after 18 minutes.

Ricardo Sa Pinto gave the Portuguese a fleeting hope with 15 minutes remaining, cutting in from the left to

fire home an equaliser from just inside the box. And he promptly scored again with a close range header amid confusion in the Metz back line.

But the French regrouped and held on, despite the late dismissal of defender Pascal Pierre.

Last year's semi-finalists Slavia Prague bowed out after their goalless encounter in Valencia, the Spaniards having won the first game 1-0. Valencia had goalkeeper Antoni Zubizarreta sent off early in the second half for handling outside his area.

Swedish side Helsingborgs, conquerors of Aston Villa in the first round, drew 1-1 at Neuchatel Xamax of Switzerland to March on 3-1.

Other sides to go into the hat for the third round draw included Besiktas of Turkey, who edged Legia Warsaw 3-2 on aggregate with Nigeria's former Everton striker Daniel Amokachi on target.

Anderlecht saw off Portugal's Vitoria Guimaraes on away goals while fellow Belgians Bruges ousted National Bucharest 3-1 on aggregate.

Feyenoord beat Espanyol of Spain 3-1 on aggregate, despite losing the home return 1-0, while Boavista advanced after hammering Dinamo Tbilisi of Georgia 5-0 to run out 5-1 winners.

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- Fluent in English. Knowledge of other foreign languages is an advantage.

Qualified applicants may submit their CVs: The Executive Director P.O. Box 5118 Amman - 11183 Jordan

All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence. No applications will be reviewed after Thursday, November 14, 1996.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNIA HIRSH

FINESSES TO THE RIGHT, TO THE LEFT...

Both vulnerable, South deals.

NORTH

♠ A 7

♥ 5 4 3 2

♦ A Q 8 5

♣ 7 3

WEST

♠ 8 8 2

♥ K Q J 9 6

♦ 9 5

♣ Q 10 4

SOUTH

♠ K J 10

♥ A 10

♦ 8 7 3

♣ A J 6 5 2

The bidding:

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

1NT Pass 3NT Pass

Opening lead: King of ♠

This hand is a dream for the

over of the finesse, a nightmare for

he permanently out of luck and a

piece of cake for the good techni-

cian. How would you play three no

rump after the lead of the king of

tennis?

The auction was a matter of sim-

ple arithmetic. With a balanced 13

points, North had no ambitions

beyond three no trump.

West led the top of the ♠.

sequence. The chronic finesse is in a state of flux — there are finessses all over the place, even a two-way spade finesse. With eight fast tricks, only one winning finesse will land the contract. Those always out of sight trump the hand. They know that every finesse they take will lose, so why even bother trying?

The technician is in control of the situation. As long as West does not hold six hearts, or five hearts and four diamonds, the contract can be claimed.

The first step is to allow West to win the first trick, then capture the heart continuation. Next, declarer plays off the three high diamonds, ending in dummy. If the suit breaks evenly, the ninth trick is there and overtricks are in the offing. As the cards lie, however, West discards a spade on the third diamond.

All is well. Declarer simply leads a heart from the table, throwing West on lead. The defender is well-come to three heart tricks as declarer discards three clubs from hand and a diamond from the table. Now West must lead a black suit, and whichever suit West selects as an exit presents declarer with the ninth trick. Easy.

TODAY AT

CINEMA TEL: 634144
PHILADELPHIA

Philadelphia 1
Tom Cruise ... in
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30
Philadelphia 2
SABRINA
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL: 699238
PLAZA

Ahmad Zaki & Yusra...in
WHIMS
(Arabic)
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL: 677420
CONCORD

CONCORD "1"
MORTAL COMBAT
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30
CONCORD "2"
NASER 56
Shows: 3:30, 6:00, 8:15, 10:45

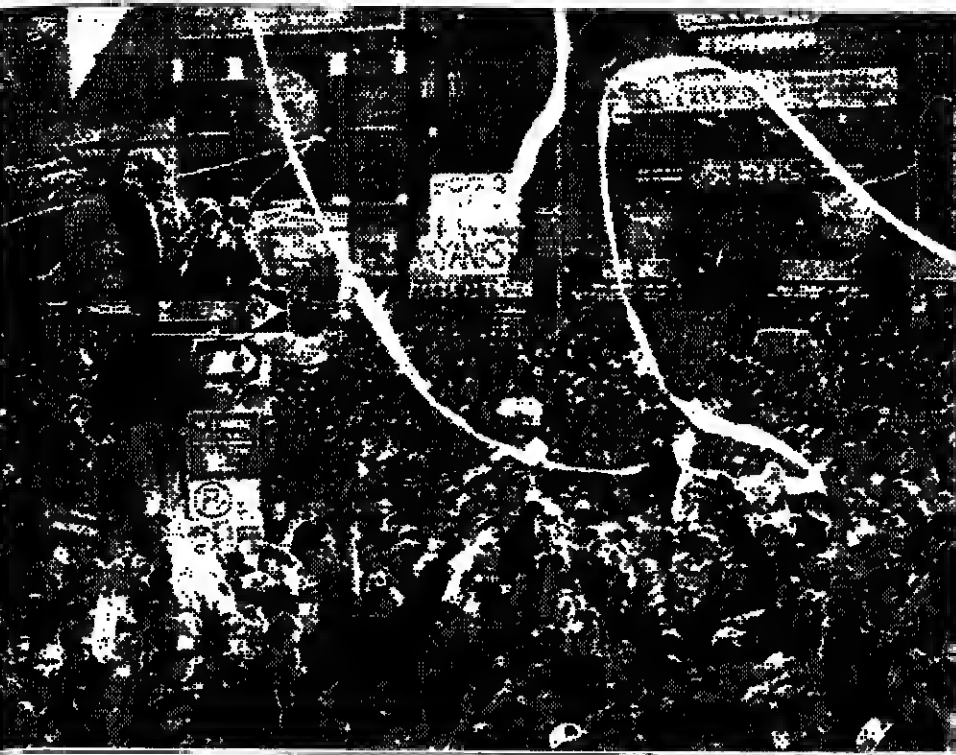
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Starring comedians:
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& Husseln Tubishat
Play starts 8:30 p.m.

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For reservation please call
625155 - 640155

Handwritten signature: محمد علي



A group of New York Yankee fans cheer a float with members of the 1996 World Series champions during a parade on Broadway Avenue in New York City. A crowd of over 3 million people attended the victory parade (Reuters photo)

3 million New Yorkers celebrate baseball heroes

NEW YORK (AFP) — More than three million people, in New York's streets and hanging out windows, showered the victorious New York Yankees baseball team with tonnes of confetti and toilet paper, city hall said Tuesday.

"This team is a metaphor for New York," said Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, who had promised "the biggest parade in the history of the city" after the Yankees won the 92nd World Series baseball championship late Saturday.

The Yankees "came from behind and never gave up," he explained.

After years of plumbing the depths of team rankings, the team beat the Atlanta Braves to win the championship, for the first time in 18 years.

As early as 6 a.m., the first fans took up position on sidewalks or in the trees of the Wall Street financial district, in the section of Broadway known as "Canyon of Heroes."

Even before the procession got under way around 11:30 a.m., handfuls of paper were being thrown from office windows.

Thousands of schoolchildren shrugged off class obligations in favour of trying to catch a glimpse of the hometown heroes and idols.

With a giant baseball leading the way, the players' dressed in the Yankees' blue and white made their way up New York streets, followed by an eclectic mix of some 60 vehicles, including an antique fire truck and one of the three known 1952 Chrysler phaetons.

Pop star Liza Minelli and famed opera tenor Placido Domingo were to give their renditions of "New York, New York" — made famous by Frank Sinatra — and the sport's anthem: "Take me out to the ballgame."

New York's tradition of casting paper out of windows to celebrate momentous events dates back to

1886, when financial service employees greeted the Statue of Liberty's inauguration by throwing handfuls of confetti made from telex paper.

Since then, victorious soldiers from the Gulf War and politicians have been honoured the same way, with their popularity measured by the volume of "ticker-tape" gathered the next day.

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Michael Jordan makes no promises about another 70-win season. But he is confident the Chicago Bulls will win their fifth National Basketball Association title in seven years.

"I want to win another one and we have an excellent chance to do so," Jordan said. "Every key player is back and few teams can say that. We should be better for having played together a whole season."

"We may not win as many games as we did last season, but the playoffs is where playing together longer makes a greater difference. The job may be tougher for us. But I feel good about our chances."

Jordan has won NBA crowns in his past four complete seasons. He averaged 30.4 points, 6.6 rebounds, 4.3 assists and 2.2 steals a game last season, when the Bulls went an unprecedented 72-10 and beat Seattle in the finals.

"I want my numbers to be consistent because they make a statement in terms of the way I play," Jordan said. "People will look at my stats and judge whether I am at the end of my career or whether I am losing a step."

Jordan signed a record \$30.14 million contract for this season. The rest of the Bulls combined will be paid \$28.13 million this



Bulls' superstar Michael Jordan

season. Some fear this one-year contract means Jordan will retire in 1997.

"It doesn't mean this is my last year," Jordan said. "As long as we continue to win championships, I want to continue playing."

Dennis Rodman, the NBA's hair-dying, dress-wearing wonder, averaged 14.9 rebounds a game last

season and signed a one-year deal for \$9 million. He has eased concerns that his wildness might disrupt the Bulls.

"They are all waiting for me to screw up, but I am always surprising people," Rodman said. "I don't need a baby-sitter."

Scottie Pippen averaged 19.4 points, 6.4 rebounds

and a team-high 5.8 assists but will make only \$2.25 million, \$250,000 less than the new one-year deal of coach Phil Jackson. Pippen's contract was not up.

Pippen makes less than reserve Toni Kukoc (\$3.96 million) and fellow starters Ron Harper (\$3.84 million) and Luc Longley (\$2.79 million).

Australian centre Longley underwent knee surgery and missed the Olympics. Robert Parish, the all-time NBA games and rebounds leader, has been signed to join Bill Wennington as reserve behind Longley.

Rival NBA coaches give the Bulls a fair chance at another 70-win season in addition to repeating as champions.

"You have to consider them one of the greatest teams ever," Minnesota coach Flip Saunders said. "What they did is phenomenal."

"Last year they had a lot going for them. Michael wanted to show he's the best player in the league," Orlando's Brian Hill said. "He imposed his will on the league. If he keeps that hunger, they could push 70 again."

And Miami's Pat Riley added: "The Chicago Bulls, with a championship team intact, are the elite in the league."

Ex-Bulls coach Doug Collins, now at Detroit,

looks for less heroics in the regular season.

"They might want to rest their bodies a bit more during the season," he said. "The pressure will be on them if they lose a few more games than last year. But they know the true test is how well they do in the playoffs."

Atlanta's Lenny Wilkens has seen better clubs. Of course, he guided the U.S. Olympic "Dream Team III" to gold in Atlanta and assisted on the original.

"I don't see the Bulls as invincible," Wilkens said. "They are the team to beat because they are the champions."

Indiana's Larry Brown sees little hope the Bulls will self-destruct.

"Dennis does a lot of crazy stuff, but when he plays, he plays. He will not disrupt that team," Brown said. "I doubt Michael will let that happen."

Jordan said: "How far he will go is something you don't know. He has his own way of expressing himself. Phil is going to give Dennis space to be himself. I don't think Phil is going to let him deteriorate what this team is about."

Wild hair and clothes are fine with Jackson if the job gets done.

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Tomba hints that he may keep skiing

TURIN (R) — Alberto Tomba, injured while training on a glacier earlier this month, hinted Tuesday that he might continue skiing until 1999.

Speaking at a news conference for the 1997 World Championships in Sestriere in February, Tomba recalled how the Italian resort was a special place for him since that was where he won his first world cup race in 1987.

"Ten years on, I am hoping for an important result in what could be my last, or penultimate, World Championships," the 29-year-old Olympic and world champion said.

"I hope to do my best to race well at home, I'm hoping for at least a medal," the Italian said.

Tomba has said he had considered retiring after winning two gold medals at the World Championships in Sierra Nevada, Spain, last January.

again," Tomba said, limping and with a cast on his right wrist.

He has been widely expected to leave the sport after Sestriere, with which he is closely linked.

But the 1999 championships are due to be held in Vail, Colorado — an American resort with which Tomba signed a publicity deal after Sierra Nevada last February.

Tomba has not ruled out competing in the world cup races held in the United States this November but he said on Tuesday that he might just go there as a spectator.

Tomba said he did not know yet when he would return to competition although he has hinted that Madonna Di Campiglio on December 17 — two days before his 30th birthday — may mark his season's debut.

"I still don't know when I will be able to start training

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يرجى من أصحاب العقارات الاتصال مع السيد محمود عيسى أبش على هاتف رقم ٦٦٦١٢٦ وذلك ما بين الساعة التاسعة صباحا والساعة الرابعة مساء من الأحد ١٩٩٦/١١/٧ ولغاية الخميس ١٩٩٦/١١/٣

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Taleban, rivals battle; none is gaining ground

Tehran meeting urges national reconciliation

KABUL (Agencies) — Taleban artillery gunners pounded positions of a northern alliance near Kabul on Wednesday morning after the militia reported heavy overnight fighting in the remote northwest.

A Taleban artillery commander was listening to reports from his spotter on the frontline north of the capital before relaying new co-ordinates to his men.

"We are aiming at Masood's positions around Bagram airport," one of the gun crew told Reuters of ousted government military chief Ahmad Shah Masood. The airport lies 50 kilometres north of the capital.

Every five minutes the Soviet-built artillery piece roared, kicking up a cloud of dust. "You must open your mouth when it fires or you will hurt your ears," a young Taleban fighter told journalists helpfully.

In Tehran, a two-day regional conference on restoring peace in Afghanistan wound up with the participants calling for

national reconciliation and a broad-based government in the war-torn country.

In its final resolution, the conference voiced "concern over the escalation of armed hostilities in Afghanistan which has resulted in immense human losses, caused irreparable damage to the country and endangered regional peace and security."

It called on the warring factions to "end violence and settle their differences through peaceful means."

The participants offered to help start a dialogue between the Afghan factions towards the establishment of a "broad-based government."

The conference was attended by representatives of Russia, India, Turkey and several Central Asian countries, but key players such as the Afghan factions, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Uzbekistan were absent.

An aid worker said, meanwhile, villagers, whose homes and fields north of Kabul have become a battlefield, were being forced to work and fight for

Afghanistan's would-be rulers.

An Afghan working for an international aid organisation, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said his village was caught between the opposing forces in the Afghan war. Stray artillery shells have landed in the village, Siyab Kuly, but no injuries were reported.

Civilians have been killed by shells and bombs in other villages near the frontline.

A total of 3,000 people live in villages in the fighting region, the aid worker said. Many are unable to flee because Taleban fighters have closed roads, he said.

The Taleban soldiers who swept into Kabul a month ago were pressing local residents to carry loads for them, cook for them and even fight, he said.

The Taleban stopped reporters from entering the area from Kabul, allowing only their fighters and aid workers past a checkpoint on the old road leading north from the capital.

Israel hints it may ban EU visit

DUBLIN (R) — The Israeli government hinted on Wednesday it might decline to receive a European Union (EU) delegation if it insisted on a symbolically-charged visit to Palestinian leaders at their Orient House offices in Jerusalem.

"The government has stated its position. It will not agree to foreign visitors to the Palestinian headquarters at Orient House," Israel's ambassador to Ireland, Zvi Gabay, said.

"The (Palestinian) headquarters is in Gaza. Anyone who wants to visit them should go to Gaza," Mr. Gabay told Irish Radio after the Dublin government, which holds the current EU presidency, announced a visit to the region in the next 10 days.

Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring and colleagues from Portugal and the Netherlands are tentatively scheduled to visit the region in the next 10 days to try to assert an EU role in a peace process dominated by the United States.

The Israeli ambassador's position was condemned by Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, who is in Dublin seeking EU support for efforts to revive the Middle East peace process.

"Is he giving orders to the European Union? It's unbelievable. How can this be accepted?" Mr. Arafat said. "I don't think the Israelis have the right to give orders to the EU."

EU diplomats said it was possible the Israeli government, which sees foreign



Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat is greeted by Irish President Mary Robinson at her residence on Wednesday (Reuters photo)

visits to the Orient House supporting Palestinian claims to Jerusalem as their capital, might not receive the three ministers, who plan to leave in the next 10 days.

"It's possible this may be resolved. The troika is very keen to visit all countries in the region, including Israel, and it would be most unfortunate if it did not go to Israel," said one.

The Israeli ambassador said his government would decide on whether to receive the EU troika. "The (Israeli) government will have to decide on this matter. Our position has been made clear."

"We believe that the Palestinians have a right to

act politically in the territories under their control, but not in Jerusalem," he said.

The EU and the Israeli government have been at loggerheads over the Orient House since Mr. Spring announced in September that the fact-finding troika intended to go there.

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy warned Mrs. Spring against the visit when he was in Dublin last month and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has echoed the opposition in statements from Tel Aviv.

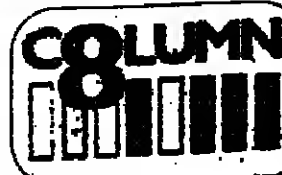
But EU policy on the Orient House was agreed in July and has not changed as part of the bloc's policy of

being even-handed to the Israeli government and Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

Mr. Arafat said his visit was aimed at securing EU support for the Middle East peace process and for Palestinian calls for the full implementation of the 1993 peace accords, including an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied town of Hebron.

He said he was hopeful EU support would help unblock the peace process. "hopeful? No doubt. For this I am here," Mr. Arafat said before paying a courtesy call on President Mary Robinson.

He left for Algiers before travelling on to Spain.



Women protest Miss World Contest

BANGALORE, India (R) — Sixteen women were arrested Tuesday after smearing cow dung and tar on the outside walls of the Bangalore office of the Miss World Beauty Contest's official Indian sponsors, police said. The pageant, which will be held in this southern Indian city next month, has attracted a storm of protests from women's groups, traditional militant organisations and Hindu nationalist politicians. Some women have even threatened to commit suicide by self-immolation to stop the show coming to India. In the latest protest the demonstrators spread the dung and tar over the windows and name plate of Godrej, the personal care products company which is sponsoring the beauty show being held in India for the first time. Police arrested them while they were chanting slogans against Godrej and Amitabh Bachchan Corporation Ltd. (ABCL), the company which holds the licence for staging this year's pageant. "They were arrested for trespass and causing mischief. Security will be stepped up at the show's venue," a senior Bangalore police official said. The organisers have already decided to stage the swimsuit stage of the contest in the Seychelle Islands in the Indian Ocean to avoid stirring up more trouble. The 91 contestants arrive in India next week. ABCL was targeted by protesters in Bangalore Sunday, but they vandalised the wrong office, apparently unaware that ABCL had moved premises a month ago.

Brazilian finds out he died 11 years ago

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — A Brazilian shopowner has found out he is officially dead, declared deceased by his former wife after they separated 11 years ago. Globo News Television reported. Avacir Avila of southern Rosario Do Ivaí has since remarried. He learned of his status when he asked authorities about adopting a boy. Globo said. His death had been confirmed by two witnesses and his ex-wife even went to his funeral. His lawyer says Mr. Avila will have to prove he is still alive through fingerprinting and exhumation of the body that was buried in his name. The television said.

Woman angered at her trivial 'death'

LONDON (AFP) — A British woman who was pronounced dead but was later saved from burial by an undertaker who noticed signs of life, is angry that her plight has been featured in the board game Trivial Pursuit, it emerged Wednesday. Daphne Banks's recovery is now included as a question in the latest edition of the popular quiz game. But the 61-year-old, who was certified dead by her doctor after an overdose, is taking legal advice about what she believes to be an invasion of her privacy by Hasbro, the makers of the board game, the Times reported. Banks, a farmer's wife from the town of Stonely in central England, told the paper she had not been asked if her case could be featured in the game. "They have invaded my privacy. I am not at all pleased," she said, adding that she was not familiar with Trivial Pursuit. "I heard there was a new edition of questions that includes one about me. I live in a small village. This game is going to be given to a lot of people at Christmas," she said. Hasbro told the Times they had no intention of upstaging Banks. The objective of the game was to acknowledge recent events "and it would be impossible to contact everyone concerned," it added.

U.S. diplomat condoles family of boy beaten to death by settler

HUSAN, West Bank (Agencies) — The U.S. consul-general in Jerusalem paid a condolence call on Wednesday to the family of a 10-year-old Palestinian boy who witnesses said was killed by a Jewish settler.

"I convey my condolences and the condolences of the United States government," Consul-General Edward Abington told the Shusha family at their West Bank home, two days after their son Hilmi died of a brain haemorrhage.

"I have a six-year-old and she is the most precious thing that I have and if anything happened to her it would be devastating to me, so I know the Shusha family must be heartbroken at the death of their son," he said.

Hilmi Shusha died in an Israeli hospital on Monday a day after the security chief of a Jewish settlement adjacent to Husan beat him on the head with a pistol handle and stomped on him, villagers said.

The settler, Nahum Kurman, has been in police custody since Sunday, refusing to answer questions by investigators.

Other settlers say Kurman chased Hilmi after he and

other boys threw stones at Israeli vehicles but did not beat the boy. An autopsy showed Hilmi died from a brain haemorrhage caused by a sharp blow to the neck.

An Israeli magistrate's court on Tuesday ordered Kurman held in police custody until Friday as police prepared to charge him.

Israel declared Husan a closed military zone prior to the visit and Mr. Abington was forced to wait more than 30 minutes at an army checkpoint outside the village before being allowed in.

"I'm prepared to wait. I find this an incredible situation," Mr. Abington told reporters before being permitted into the village.

"I've come to pay my condolences to the family of Hilmi Shusha," he said.

Hilmi's funeral on Tuesday was attended by hundreds of people and afterwards stone-throwing youths clashed with Israeli soldiers who fired rubber bullets and tear-gas to disperse the protesters.

An army spokesman announced early Wednesday that Husan had been declared a "closed military zone ... due to fear of new disturbances."

The army said the measures only concerned Israeli citizens although soldiers at the roadblock outside Husan also prevented foreign journalists from entering the village.

A spokesman at the U.S. consulate in Jerusalem said Mr. Abington's visit to the Shusha family was a rare gesture.

"This was an unusual and very sad case. Abington was very moved by the matter," the spokesman said.

He said Mr. Abington had "made similar gestures in past cases, but very rarely."

Mr. Abington sat on a plastic chair in the courtyard of the Shusha family's two-storey home, surrounded by dozens of mourners. Keeping with Palestinian tradition, Mr. Abington and the others sipped bitter black coffee served in small cups without handles.

Mr. Abington said he was confident the Israeli government would proceed with the investigation into the boy's death and "fulfill the law to the letter." However, Mr. Abington remained silent when mourners complained to him about what they said were settler provocations.

Dudayev's widow said to be in Mideast

TEL AVIV (AP) — The widow of Chechen rebel leader Dzhokhar Dudayev is hiding in the Middle East and has been offered a senior post in the new government of Chechnya, an Israeli newspaper said Wednesday.

The daily Haaretz said it interviewed Alla Dudayev, who disappeared in Moscow five months ago, by telephone. Her voice was identified for the paper by a woman who knew her, Haaretz said.

Mrs. Dudayev, a Russian poet and painter who converted to Islam when she married, said she has been offered a senior post in the new Chechen government but prefers to raise money abroad "for the children of Chechnya ... who still face a hard winter."

"I hope that, like other presidents' wives, I will be able to engage in charity work," she said.

Chechnya is a tiny republic that declared independence from Russia in 1991. Russian President Boris Yeltsin sent in troops three years later to put down the secessionist drive, led by Dudayev. Before a truce was signed in August, an estimated 18,000 to 100,000 people were killed in the fighting.

Dudayev was reported killed by a Russian missile that hit him on his satellite telephone in April. His wife, however, refused to deny persistent rumours that he is alive.

"For me he is still alive and will remain so in the hearts of those who love him, so long as we follow his path and do not give up our freedom," she told Haaretz.

Mrs. Dudayev herself was stopped by Russian border police in May at an airport in Russia's northern Caucasus mountains as she was trying to fly to Istanbul. She was given a new Russian passport, and lived in Moscow until she was reported missing in June.

She told Haaretz that she rejects the Kremlin's claim that her husband was an extremist whose removal made peace possible. She said he would have approved the peace agreement.

She denied reports that she had spent some time in Israel during her flight but said she would like to visit the Jewish state.

Libya, Tunisia to mediate between Algeria, Morocco over W. Sahara

TUNIS (AFP) — Libya and Tunisia have decided to take steps to resolve a dispute over Western Sahara which has set Algeria against Morocco and threatened to upset the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi said Wednesday.

"I have agreed with the Tunisian president to work towards a solution between Algeria and Morocco in order to protect the Arab Maghreb Union," Colonel Qaddafi, who arrived here Monday, told Tunisian students.

The seven-year-old AMU, which is made up of Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia, is going through a serious crisis because of the dispute between Algeria and Morocco.

The issue of the former Spanish colony of Western Sahara is "the direct cause" of the crisis, Col.

Qaddafi said. "Morocco is making accusations and Algeria is defending itself, and it looks like the problem is being used as a pretext for blocking the progress of the Arab Maghreb Union," he said.

The Sahrawi Polisario Front began fighting Morocco, which claims sovereignty over the Western Sahara, in 1975. Polisario is seeking the independence of the Western Sahara. A ceasefire has been in force for five years.

Algeria has long backed Polisario's efforts to promote sovereignty for the former Spanish colony.

The United Nations has undertaken to organise a referendum on self-determination in the territory, but its efforts have stalled in the face of obstacles from both sides.

Polisario and Morocco

notably disagree on who should be entitled to vote in the referendum. Many Sahrawis live in exile and many Moroccans have settled in the territory.

The AMU stopped being operational last year after Morocco protested against Algeria's attitude towards Western Sahara.

Col. Qaddafi said he believed there was "an American-Zionist plot" against the AMU, and that whoever was "hocking the union's process" necessarily became a part of the plot.

He denounced Morocco for blocking the whole union, saying it could have simply pulled out.

Col. Qaddafi arrived overland from Libya because of the air embargo imposed on his country since 1992 and is due to stay until Friday.

Death toll in Cairo collapse rises to 31; hope almost nil for missing

CAIRO (Agencies) — At least 31 people have died and time is running out for about 80 more feared buried under the rubble of a collapsed Cairo apartment block, police and rescue workers said in the Egyptian capital on Wednesday.

Police at the scene told Reuters rescuers searching the debris of the 11-storey building which fell on Sunday have so far pulled out 27 corpses. More than 24 survivors have also been dug out but four died in hospital, they added.

On Tuesday, rescuers pulled out two women alive after 36 hours entombed beneath the rubble but a German Red Cross worker said chances of finding any more survivors were evaporating.

"The time frame is 60 hours after the disaster... It's very difficult to find anyone alive in this weather," he said.

Smells of rotting flesh wafted from the rubble mountain as rescuers exposed new sections of the fallen building. Cairo's weather has been sunny and warm since Sunday.

Doctors have also said many corpses are being pulled out partly decomposed — a sign that there is

no oxygen circulating through the debris.

Authorities have said the building in the suburb of Heliopolis had been illegally heightened.

The Interior Ministry has said prosecutors were questioning the owner of the building for illegally adding five storeys after getting permission to build one.

Soaring Cairo real estate prices have often pushed landlords to add extra floors to their properties illegally. Several buildings have collapsed beneath the extra weight and recent earthquakes have also taken their toll on poorly constructed buildings in the crowded capital.

The bodies of an Iraqi, a Palestinian and a Sudanese and three other people were recovered by rescue teams who worked throughout the night under powerful floodlights, police said. Rescuers and police said an estimated 30 to 40 residents of the building may still be buried under tonnes of concrete and twisted steel.

Nineteen people were injured when the building suddenly collapsed Sunday evening and "only four of them remain hospitalised," the MENA news agency quoted a Cairo health official

as saying Wednesday. "They are all in stable condition," added Mahmoud Owaida.

Two young women — an Egyptian university student and a 17-year-old American who was looking to rent an apartment in the building with her Egyptian-born mother — were pulled alive from the debris on Tuesday, both in good condition.

The mother of the American teenager, Samantha Miksche of Los Angeles, remains missing.

Police said the search for survivors would continue for another 48 hours but a Red Cross team from Germany which arrived on Tuesday with sniffer dogs was to return home Wednesday night.

A 24-member Japanese search team is expected to arrive on Wednesday.

The Egyptian authorities have set up a committee of experts to try to determine the reasons for the collapse.

The newspaper Al Akhbar reported Wednesday that poor quality cement may have been used in building the apartment complex.

The building's owner, Raouf Wisa Ibrahim, has been detained and charged with "extreme negligence and unpremeditated murder."

Handwritten signature or text in Arabic script.